

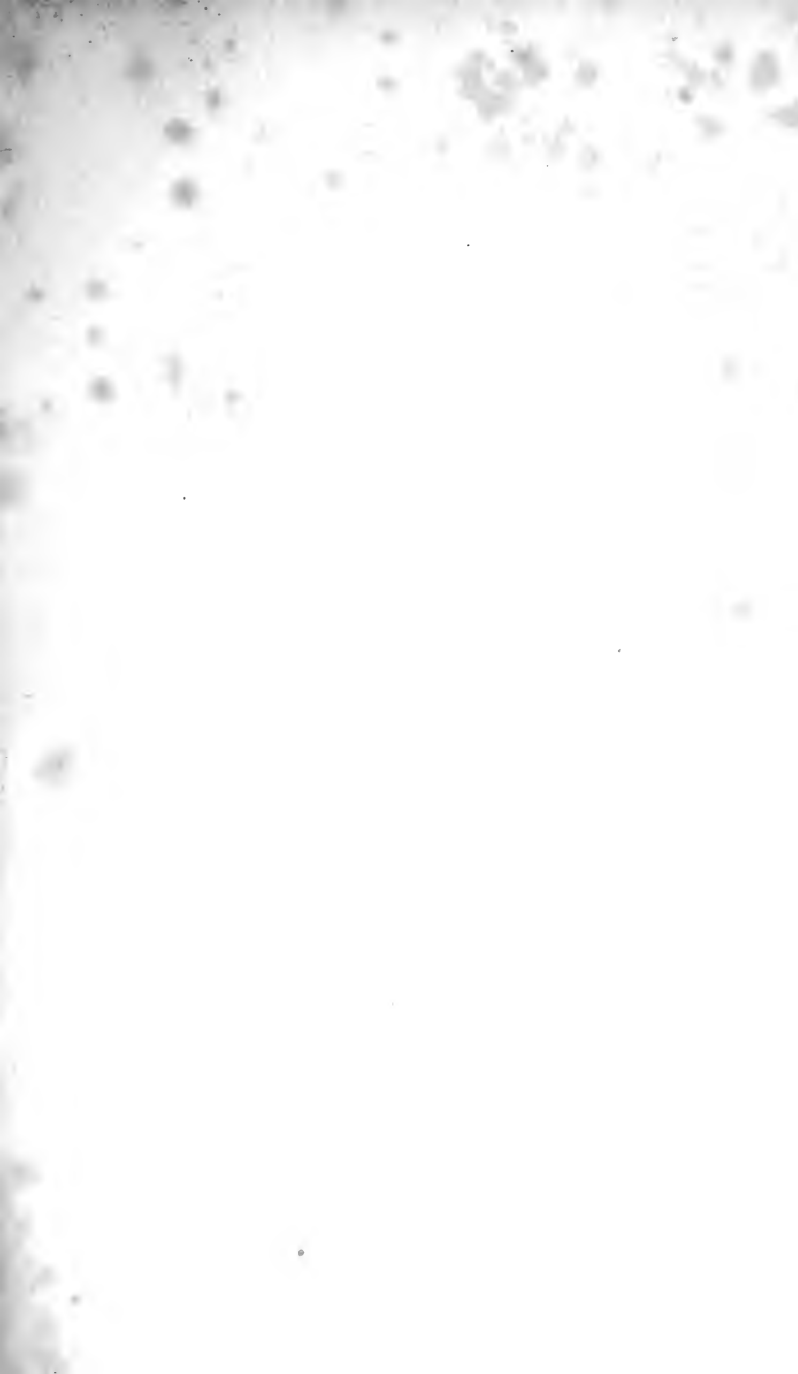


LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

823
W216i
v.2

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign







ILLUSTRATIONS
OF
HUMAN LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“TREMAINE” AND “DE VERE.”

“ I can truly say, that of all the papers I have blotted, which have been a good deal in my time, I have never written any thing for the public without the intention of some public good. Whether I have succeeded or not, is not my part to judge.”—SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

FIELDING; OR, SOCIETY.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET

MDCCCXXXVII.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS,
Stamford Street.

823
W, 2162
v. 2

FIELDING;

OR,

SOCIETY.

PART I.

MOTIVES.

“ Freburg, thou know’st not man, not nature’s man,
But only him, who in smooth studied works
Of polish’d sages shines deceitfully,
In all the splendid foppery of virtue.
That man was never born whose secret soul,
With all its motley treasure of dark thoughts,
Foul phantasies, vain musings, and wild dreams,
Was ever open to another’s scan.”

MISS BAILLIE’S DE MONTFORD.

“ Nous aurions souvent honte de nos plus belles actions, si le monde voyoit tous les motifs qui les produisoient.”

DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD



To H. B.. Esq.

I HAVE not forgotten your question (a momentous one for many of us), “If every heart were examined by a touchstone, what would be the result?” I felt uneasy at the time you made it, though over a bottle, when, in general, the heart is, or thinks itself, open. I have brooded over it since, and like it less and less the more I brood. At first I would not admit the *inuendo* wrapt up in it; but a few prickings of conscience would not allow me to be quiet. I strove to forget it, but could do no more than lull myself into a kind of indifference; and, at length, thought I had lost it amid other inquiries. But the death of our friend Fielding, and some papers of his which came to me as his executor, brought the whole subject before me.

Fielding was, as you know, a great observer of mankind, and penetrated the inmost recesses of the heart almost as shrewdly as his namesake; and, if it had not been done already, might, as we used to think, have written *Tom Jones*. You know how keen he could be in searching for motives; and it was well for us that his satire was generally tempered with discretion, and, as I ought in justice to say, with good-nature. What, however, he would not publish to the world, he treasured in his closet—nay, gave it the shape of a *Journal*, or rather *Memoir*, which he kept of the outset of his life, when he was a mere tyro to what he afterwards became. This, in my quality of executor, having come into my hands, I must own it sadly supports the inference drawn from your question. I give it to you, therefore, as almost having a right to it.

That neither Fielding nor myself, however, may be misunderstood, let me beg of you, in reading it, always to bear in mind the important observation he makes upon his own narrative—that it *purposely*

is confined to the *defects* of human nature, and almost wholly passes over the fairer side of the question. Why this should have been, we have no right to inquire, as he has not explained himself. It is, however, comfortable as well as of consequence to remark, that he thought there *really was a* fairer side of the question.

Believe me, with great esteem,

Yours, &c. &c.



FIELDING;

OR,

SOCIETY.

PART I.

MOTIVES.

I WAS born in one of the British Isles, of a family sufficiently high to enable me to be an aristocrat if I had pleased, but not so high as to keep me at a distance from those lower ranks in which as much, if not more, of what may be called nature is exhibited. Vastly convenient this, for one of the turn I at last took, of being an observer of men and things, without belonging to any particular order.

Some people are remarkable for having every sense but common sense. I had nothing else: if I had that (which I much doubt): I was not accomplished; and, though expensively educated, had little learning. But from childhood I was very observant; and my spirit of investigation sometimes cost me dear; as my aunt Penelope

witnessed against me in a manner more natural perhaps than just.

This lady, an old maid, of good family, but very small fortune, was fond of going to Brighton and other fashionable places in the season; and she found it convenient always to lodge up two pair of stairs. She had various excuses for this. Sometimes it was that she wished to be near her sister, my mother, but could not find any other lodging in the neighbourhood; sometimes (indeed for the most part) because she so loved the high air, and a wider sea prospect. I was about nine years old when I heard her once talking in this way, and in my discretion I exclaimed,—"Aunt, how can you say so, when you told papa that you were ashamed of two pair of stairs, and only did not go lower because you could not afford it?"

This got me the appellation of "foolish monkey," and a box on the ear, which was anything but in jest, though she tried to make it appear so.

I got the character of a sharp little fellow among the company; but upon her death, a year afterwards, we found my name struck out of her will, and the little she had to leave was bequeathed to my brother, a child in petticoats.

I was too young to understand, much less to care for, this revenge; but it increased, if it did

not originate, the disposition I had to investigate real motives, when only ostensible ones appeared.

At school I found out boys' characters before they were aware of it. They had their revenge, for I had no thought of concealing mine. I know not whether this was because I was honest ; but I was too indolent to be anything else.

My father was rich, and a Seigneur du Village. I was his heir, and the tenants and servants, nay many of the little country gentlemen in the neighbourhood, courted me. But I soon knew who noticed me from concealed motives, who from real good will.

I was early an admirer of the sex, and notwithstanding my hint of common sense (I did not positively assert it), was often duped by them. Indeed to escape this dupery was the most difficult thing I ever had to contend with.

My father had a horror of a public school, and indeed of any early acquaintance with the world ; that is, he would say, with vice and hypocrisy, particularly in London. I was placed therefore under the tuition of a clergyman in the country. But will any man believe that my penetration was ever worth a farthing, when, at sixteen, I was very nearly taken in by a down-cast look, a sigh, and a sort of tremor whenever our hands touched,

in a cunning hussy, my tutor's niece, ten years older than myself?

We were to be sure, only friends ; but she was fond of reading the character of Helen to me, in " All's well that Ends well," and would call me Bertram, especially when I once took leave of her to go home for a vacation. She read on that occasion, with a peculiar emphasis which did not pass unnoticed, the pretty passage,

" In his bright radiance, and collateral light
Must I be comforted,—not in his sphere."

Our parting therefore was tender ; she cried much, and her eyes were very red. But I heard her laugh as I rode off ; which set me thinking ; and afterwards I was told by a maid, with whom she had quarrelled, that her tears and red eyes were occasioned by a quantity of lavender water which she had put into them on purpose. I never told her this, for my father soon afterwards removed me, and I never returned. My father had discovered the whole secret, such as it was ; but never told me he knew it, nor assigned it as a reason to my tutor for leaving him ; on the contrary, he said it was in order to send me to Glasgow for a year, previous to my going to Oxford : which, as I never was sent to Glasgow, I thought very odd.

Let me, however, do my father justice. He was not an insincere man, but good-natured almost to a weakness, and did not like to hurt my tutor. To be sure my tutor wondered at my being kept at home, instead of going to Glasgow; but luckily no explanations took place between them.

I have mentioned that my father, like many others, had notions of his own as to the education of his children; and his fear of the corruptions of the world made him so timorous, that he would scarcely let me read the best of all books, those that treat of human life and manners. All plays but tragedies, all satirists, and the liveliér periodical essays, such as the *World* and *Connoisseur*, were banished, and Addison allowed alone, on account of the preponderance of his serious matter. From newspapers, except the *County Chronicle* and other matter-of-fact publications, I was strictly kept; and as to any acquired notions of the existing world, I was almost a sheet of white paper.

This, however, could not continue. My rank and expectations obliged my father to do that which he would willingly have avoided. I was sent to college; and an entire new world opened to me. At first I was quizzed as the rarest freshman ever seen. I was imposed upon, humbugged, and laughed at. But only at first. My

shrewdness showed itself, and was respected. In fact, my curiosity about characters made people a little afraid ; and in truth I had enough to do. The pride and jealousy of tutors ; the blown-up self-consequence of heads of houses ; the complacency of clerical dandies ; the insolence of fellow commoners (especially of the *nouveaux riches*) ; these formed an admirable contrast to the subserviency of tuft hunters and other subordinates, who had their way to make, either in college, or the world.

The strivings of these last to obtain a common bow or nod of recognition from the first, were highly amusing. But it often cost them dear ; for the bow and nod were sometimes forgotten ; and one man, the particular intimate of a nobleman in college, fretted himself into a decline, because his noble friend did not notice him in London.

Yet motives were never avowed, at least not real ones ; and I observed that wherever there were two that prompted any particular conduct, the weakest was always the one put forward.

A reverend prebendary, in a cathedral town, once amused me much. He complained that the stalls in the chapel were cold ; and being a great invalid, of a high family, he used all his interest on a vacancy, to become dean,—merely for his

health's sake. There was matting and a velvet cushion in the dean's stall; none in that of the prebendaries.

My common sense told me all this ought to be reversed; but I supposed it was human nature, though I could not make it out.

I afterwards, indeed, became acquainted with courtiers and coquettes, both male and female; but though disguise had become with them a system, and a sort of trade, I found that the only difference between them and younger people was, that they had more experience.

I was first led to the observation of this, by seeing a young man of my own age excessively attentive to a very old, and apparently disagreeable woman. I asked his reason. He said it was mere charity, as few would take the least notice of her;—and, as I knew he was good-natured, I believed him. I afterwards found that a certain great lady, to whom the other had been governess, and who thought it a duty to correspond with her, was fond of chit-chat, and made her deal largely in gossip; so that all my friend ever said or did was sure to be put down, and sent to the great lady. With her, she being one of the sovereigns of fashion, it was an object with him to stand well. Moreover, the great lady had a very pretty daughter, and both mother and

daughter were rather romantic ; and accordingly my friend's conversations with the old governess were always sentimental and romantic. To read the governess's letters, one would have supposed him Sir Charles Grandison himself: which did him no disservice with the ladies in question. Nothing, I believe, particular came of it, except the introduction he so much wished, to a place in society which he might otherwise have failed to acquire.

All this I afterwards learned from the great lady herself, and it illustrated my growing theory as to a division of motives, assignable and unassignable, which afterwards stood me in much stead in my commerce with the world.

One of the most pregnant instances of this occurred when I was very young, at a great festive Easter assemblage, at a great castle in the south. It was full of dance and jollity, midnight sport and revelry ; in short, it was, among other amusements, the temple of music. One of the priestesses was particularly excellent at the piano ; yet not content with the praises which really were her due, she always played with gloves on, the fingers of which, too, were longer than could be convenient for any common occupation. We all wondered at this, as we thought it must impede her play. She said it did, but that without

the warmth of this aid, her poor fingers could not move at all. This astonished us the more, as no one, even without gloves, could show such rapidity of finger. Our astonishment was exactly what she wanted. She sang well too, and sang often; and being "Lady Mary," completely eclipsed a young female commoner, who yet had many fair pretensions. The eclipse grieved her mother to the soul. One day Lady Mary kept her room with a cold. "Ah! poor thing!" said the rival's mother, "poor, dear Lady Mary; she cannot, must not come down; and we cannot hear her sing to-night." This concern gave me a high idea of the lady's friendship, which lasted full an hour, until I heard her felicitating herself and her daughter, that they should, *that* evening at least, listen to *her*, without being forced to hear any odious Lady Mary. I was astounded, but thinking it the way of the world, went on observing.

From possessing the sort of curiosity I have described, almost every incident that arose, trivial or serious, turned itself to account. But I was a sad novice at first; for, strange to say, I had never been in London, and my experience had been confined to a country village, or at best to Oxford. I was, in fact, sadly ashamed of my ignorance, and sometimes seemed ridiculous, even to myself,

by the surprise I expressed at the many new discoveries I daily made.

About this time, my father died. I came to London, and was glad to be taken under the protection of one of my cousins, a man of considerable fashion, and what I liked more, not only very observing, and infinitely more knowing than myself, but kindly communicative ; of which I had all the benefit. Sir Charles Etheredge was indeed “ a gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable discourse, and great admittance ;” and with him I associated much, and was the less scrupulous in allowing myself to be amused by his turn for satire, because I knew at bottom he had both benevolence and honour. His turn was indeed decidedly critical. He probed deeply ; was a lover of Rochefocault and La Bruyère ; did not dislike Lord Halifax or Horace Walpole, and had no aversion to Swift. But on the other hand, he idolized Addison ; and, however he laughed at the follies of women, no man was more alive to the softness and dignity of the female character, where they really existed. He was, in fact, like Lord Dorset,

“ The best good natured man with the worst natured Muse.”

From this gentleman I received many lessons, as will be seen ; and no occupation, or meeting of

amusement, no scene, public or private, in house or street, walking or riding, in garden or park, was exempt from this instruction. In short, wherever there were men and women, there also was food for keen observation.

The first time this disposition of his challenged my notice, was in a walk, when we were met by an active, open-countenanced man, who eagerly addressed him with inquiries after his health; was glad to see him so perfectly well; hoped he had no return of the nasty pains that used to plague him; in short, prayed, to use the Spanish phrase, that he might live a thousand years. As I had never heard of this gentleman before, I was surprised at the eagerness of his address; but Etheredge explained it, by telling me the man was sincere, for he was chairman of a great insurance company, where Etheredge's life was insured to a large amount.

Soon after we were accosted by a person who drove by in a most fashionable barouche, but stopped to ask us whether it was true that the drawing-room of next day was postponed? "You mean to be there, of course," said Etheredge. "I wished it," replied he, with a sigh, "but you know my poor friend Lord C. died yesterday, and we were so intimate, I don't think I could

possibly be seen at court. I am really under great concern for Lord C."

"Now who would believe," said Etheredge, when his friend had passed, "that is a lie, and a very silly one, as all the world knows he was scarcely acquainted with Lord C."

"But he is very intimate," said I, "with Lord C.'s son, and no doubt feels much for him."

"Judge for yourself," said my companion. "The gentleman is neither more nor less than a sentimental tuft hunter by disposition, and a very knavish usurer by profession; perhaps the only one of his sort in town. Having made a fortune by fleecing young heirs who paid him from forty to fifty per cent., he had been long smitten with the love of courts and titled people; and being the creditor of many of the young nobility, he endeavoured to make use of their necessities, to pass him over from the plebeian shore on which he was hatched, to the sunny bank of aristocracy. In doing this, he would assume a tone of generous indignation against other usurers, who, he said, were only fit to live in their own kitchens, and were satisfied with making no figure, if they could make fifty per cent. of their money; whereas he would be glad to lend to my lord, whom he may call his friend as well as client, at thirty, and

even twenty, when the security was particularly good. But as all friendship must be reciprocal, he would ask the young peer in return to facilitate his wish for higher society, more consonant to his fortune and pretensions, and in particular, perhaps, to do him the honour to present him at court. This he actually proposed to the young Lord B., the son of the deceased Lord C., who, in the hope of being let off twenty per cent. (which, however, did not succeed), made the promise demanded, but is thus disabled from performing it, by the death of his father. How much, therefore, of his grief for Lord C. is occasioned by friendship for his son, how much by his disappointment as to the presentation, wiser people may determine."

We had not yet done ; for in St. James's Park we were accosted by a person of a very jaunty air, but of wild look and heated jaded countenance, such as the gaming-table or betting-stand bestow upon their frequenters. His tone of voice and manner corresponded with this appearance, and he asked Etheredge how he did, in a sort of slang language, so vulgarly familiar, and yet so sheepishly doubtful of the reception he might meet with, that I could not help afterwards noticing it. Etheredge was evidently cool with him ;

but, by way of conversation, asked if he had lately seen his relation Sir James D.?

“I hope the old man is well,” he said; “I have a great regard for him and all his family, but I now seldom visit them; for, to tell you the truth, old Squaretoes, and still more my lady, have looked so queer upon me of late, that paying one’s duty is anything but agreeable. But I suppose, like the rest of world, they are *biassed* by those two or three untoward accidents which made such a noise at the time.”

“These accidents,” said Etheredge, after he left us, “were merely a very gross case of seduction, a fraudulent pecuniary transaction to the amount of some thousands, and, being in parliament, a black political treachery.”

“I suppose,” said I, “he is not received.”

“I beg your pardon,” he rejoined. “I have told you he is in parliament, and the party for whom he betrayed his own received him with open arms.”

“I am horrified,” said I; “can such things be?” But my reflections were cut short by encountering a Mrs. S., a well-dressed, fashionable-looking woman, walking with two pretty children; her carriage following, to relieve them when tired. They were in an amiable group, and I saw and

heard nothing in what she said to my companion, which did not entitle me to congratulate him on his acquaintance.

“She is amiable enough,” he said, “if left to herself; and can be sensible when she pleases; but she is a martyr to the universal mania of getting above one’s own sphere. Though a family friend, she once quarrelled with me for not getting her into Almack’s; which I could not have done, even if I had complied with her very modest request.”

“And what was that?”

“Why, you know the rule of those female tyrants the patronesses, that none should have subscriptions who are not on the visiting-lists of some one or other of them; and she not belonging to this *élite*, the request was neither more nor less than to get her to be allowed to leave her card with one of their high mightinesses; she proposing to agree to a condition that no acquaintance should follow.”

“What meanness!” said I.

“But true,” he observed; “and all amply made up if she could have succeeded in obtaining this envied privilege. She is a strange instance how a person, meant by nature to be respectable, and who is really well gifted, can spoil all by the folly of not keeping to her own class, and the consequent tricks and dishonesty of vanity. You see

she is still handsome, and dresses well ; but this year, for the first time, she invests her fine head in an enormous cap. She says it is because she is so subject to cold ; which she never was in her life. Her maid has let out that it is to cover some provoking grey hairs. I once asked her if she knew Lady Sarah B. She said she had the honour of her acquaintance, and had been at her house ; and added, ‘ How charming she is ! ’ It happened that I knew the extent of their acquaintance was, that she had been to inquire the character of a servant ; and the visit, as she wished to call it, was of course not returned.”

“ And is this what you call the universal mania ? ” said I. “ My ignorance, you see, is great, but I would be glad, if I am worthy of it, to be enlightened.”

“ And have you not then,” replied Etheredge, “ ever heard of the struggles and strifes created by our artificial modes of life ; of the consequent difficulties imposed by the laws of society ; and the fetters in which most men, and all women, hold one another ? It is the boast of Englishmen, that there are no privileged orders, and that the career of ambition, as well as of the law, is equally open^d to all. Such is our theoretical constitution. But look at our practice, and all is contradicted. Never was such a tyranny as that

exercised by all classes over one another. The very equality of their legal rights makes them eager to surround themselves with a wall of ceremonies and interdictions, which cause our philosophers to laugh in their closets, but which, nevertheless, even they obey the moment they come into the world. It is the fashion to attribute this to the aristocracy alone. That is not so. There is fashion everywhere, and as many shades of it as divisions in the social ranks. The aristocracy being at the head, are of course more marked; but they have not more pride, (perhaps they have less) than their inferiors. There is as much *exclusiveness* prevalent among tradesmen, churchmen, and lawyers, (I am not so sure of the doctors), and a great deal more from great to little squires at a race-ball, as well as from both towards the citizens of a neighbouring town, as prevails among dukes and lords of the highest degree. Indeed, the difference is in favour of the latter, from their being higher bred, higher born, and farther removed from rivalry. This difference prevailed a long time ago, and is not confined to England. You may remember La Bruyere,—‘La ville est partagée en diverses sociétés qui sont comme des petites républiques, qui ont leurs loix, leurs usages, leurs jargon, et leurs mots pour rire.’

“The contention is generally most fierce between the classes that most approximate to each other ; as foreign potentates who are nearest neighbours are said to be the most natural enemies. The wealth too of the middle ranks, with us, brings them so near to a level with the highest, that the jealousy of the latter is aroused to a very keen vigilance against farther encroachment.

“Hence, though our noblesse, unlike that of foreign countries, have no privileges from the law, they have yet fenced themselves in with so many bulwarks, from custom and prejudice, that their superiority in these matters, though merely the offspring of convention and opinion, seems more enviable even than the other. Hence the anxiety of the *upper* ranks to keep up the line of demarcation between themselves and their rivals, and the intense perseverance of the latter to break through the distinction. Where they fail, they seek their revenge by abusing the superior order ; a piece of bad taste, which the superior sees through, laughs at, and despises. It is true that some may shun the little among the great because they are above, but many more because they are below them.”

“Most learnedly treated,” said I ; “and it will aid me much to understand this new world into which I have so suddenly fallen.”

“You will have abundant illustration of it,” returned Etheredge, “in the course of your progress :” and with this we separated for the day.

Much did I ponder on these precepts, and on the examples that followed, until they thickened upon me to such a degree, that I resolved to keep a journal of them ; and here is the result.

Let me, however, guard myself from being misunderstood. I mean not to give a general view of human nature, in all its virtues as well as defects. The defects are generally guarded by dissimulation and conventional disguises ; the virtues speak for themselves. There is, therefore, a fairer side of the question, and Heaven forbid there should not be ; but it does not lie within the scope of my design to touch it.

What puzzled me most in the survey which I took of London society on my first arrival, was the manner in which the minions of the world, particularly the female part of it, got through the earlier parts of the day.

Their mode of life I thought would have jaded them to death ; not from too much work, but the want of it. I in vain looked for the interest which *useful* employment gives to middle life ; to which I had hitherto been most accustomed.

The employments I saw were, for the most part, of the most nugatory character. A little em-

broidery, a little filigree, a little German, or a little music lesson, (chiefly for fashion's sake, and, with most, utterly thrown away,) filled up very valuable hours. Numbers of well-bound books lay upon costly tables; whether read or not, was a problem; for they were never made subjects of conversation, unless for personal allusion. The elder ladies might fairly be expected to lounge away a few hours in cushioned chairs; but to see the younger ones stretched out at listless length on their sofas, at any hour of the morning from breakfast to luncheon, (that happy break in the too long epoch between breakfast and dinner,) and all this without apparent ennui, moved my wonder.

Locomotion, except in almost the same state of recumbency, in carriages through the streets, (for the country was never visited,) was all the exercise these spoiled children allowed themselves, save and except where a few choice spirits disported their beautiful forms on horseback. Here, indeed, there was no ennui. Whether it was banished from the eternal barouche, where I saw and heard many a yawn, may be doubtful. But on the whole, the system worked; time was got rid of, and an opinion of a cynical man of genius confirmed, that society by degrees is constructed into a machine, that carries us safely and *insipidly*

from one end of life to the other, in a very comfortable prose style.*

“It is this want of *useful* occupation,” says the shrewd Paley, “that draws so many to the gaming-table and the horse-course. I do not mean to blame the rich and great, *perhaps they cannot do better.*”

It is certain that, with all its bustle, unless with well-regulated minds, the Temple of Ennui is London.

I shall not soon forget a drive I was once pressed to take with one of my high-bred cousins. “I do so like,” said she, “those garden drives among the nurseries in the environs. They seem so natural, and so rational in comparison with hot streets, and unmeaning profitless visits over the eternal pavement, to and from people we do not care for. But then it is disagreeable to have nobody to converse with, even among roses; so you have come quite *à propos.*”

Mrs. H., who uttered this pretty sentiment, was a young and handsome widow, and you may suppose her party was accepted. Indeed, we had every prospect of the natural pleasures she had described. It was warm May; the dust had been laid by a soft and refreshing rain; the gardens all shone with vivifying drops, and the fra-

* Hazlitt.

grance exceeded all the crystal vases on Mrs. H.'s table; the sun was not too hot, and the birds sang. The scene was made even more perfect by a grateful stillness, quite unexpected at that time of day in that busy road; it was one of those pauses in nature which sometimes occur, as unaccountable as sudden, in the hum of mankind, as if Nature and Art too stood in need of a momentary repose. It was only the more pleasing, from being unexpected; and for my part, I gave up my whole sense to the enjoyment of it; and supposing Mrs. H. did so too, I was careful not to interrupt her by conversation, at which, notwithstanding her wish for companionship, she had not made the slightest attempt, from the moment she got into the carriage.

What then was my surprise and disappointment, to hear her complain of dullness, and before she had visited a single garden, order the carriage home! Seeing that I looked astonished, she condescended to explain, that she had just recollected an order of some importance, which could not be deferred. When given, however, it seemed utterly without consequence, while a numerous set of visiting cards, left in her absence, were inspected with eager minuteness.

"It is so amusing," she said, "to examine who has called; though, if at home, I should have

been miserable to have had these people let in. But what are we to do?" she added, "unluckily I have done all my shopping."

"Suppose," said I, "we drive back to those beautiful gardens you are so fond of?"

"O no! it is too late now;"—(Mem. it was not four o'clock) and she drove to the Park.

So much for motives, and ennui.

Against this last monster, however, there are some powerful antidotes at particular times of the day; and how dull and difficult so ever to get through the morning, even with the help of clubs and newspapers three times read, no one complained of those industrious and happy hours devoted to dinner, with all its exciting concomitants. Here the heart opens as well as the mouth. The bent and bias of every mind are tempted to disclose themselves, and if conventional insincerity is ever to be banished, and the disguise of manners thrown off so as to let in something like real character, it is at table. *In vino veritas*; but still, under proper management, whether by the noble or the underling, the rival or the parasite.

One of the most striking instances of this I found at a dinner of the famous dinner-giving Lord R., celebrated for the best cook and the best cellar in town.

Nothing could be more *recherché* than his *entremets*, his *Johannisberg* ; and in short, one might say of him what was said of another, two hundred years ago,—“ qu'il a porté le talent de se bien nourrir, jusqu' où il pouvoit aller.”

He piqued himself thereupon, and, indeed, upon his whole table ; and he expected nothing but unqualified adulation in return. It was easy to pay this, but then he was strict in exacting it ; and he who did not admire, much more if he ventured to criticise, was sure never to be asked again.

He once took offence at one of his guests putting salt to his soup before he tasted it, and with another for hinting that the St. Peray was not iced enough.

Judge, then, my horror, on observing a tall, dark-visaged man among the guests, who gave his opinions most freely, both upon the viands and the liquors ; not only without offending the noble restaurateur, but seemingly obtaining much attention to his criticisms. It was Dr. — who had the reputation of being one of the honestest of men, among those who did not know him ; of the most profound parasite, among those who did.

At the beginning of dinner, I ranked him among the first : for if a parasite, he disdained being a common-place one ; he was rather one of

those who, "having been praised for bluntness, did affect a saucy roughness." In particular, at Lord R.'s he quarrelled with a round of beef at the side-board, which he said was hard and too much salted; and, calling for small beer, as more wholesome than ale, he absolutely made wry faces, and sent it away.

Lord R., who, from his character, I expected would be displeased, only asked him good-humouredly what was the matter;—to which he answered rather roughly, that he never could disguise his opinions, and he must say the beer was but queerish stuff, and wondered Lord R. could endure it.

The uninitiated, myself among them, seemed struck with this amazing liberty, and supposed he had signed his dinner death-warrant. Not so those who knew better; for Lord R., who was a man of great discrimination, did not seem at all angry at the Doctor's abuse of his beef and beer. I was soon let into the secret, by his lordship admitting the crime in its fullest extent.

"I am sorry, Doctor," said he, "that they do not please you, but they are not of *my* providing, and I do not answer for English tastes. Indeed I never supposed that you, who have been so much abroad, would slight those *diettenels*, or

those iced flasks, to attempt such plebeian fare, which is here for form's sake merely."

"Slight these dettenels, and this burgundy!" cried the Doctor with vehemence—"I cannot say I feel obliged to your lordship for paying so poor a compliment to my palate, which, in all my practice, never met with anything so admirable. Why, they are worthy Apicius. Your *chef* must be *cordon bleu de son ordre*; and as for the Johannisberg, it is nectar itself. Still I must be plain, and repeat that I like corned beef and small beer when I can get them good; but that here the one is hard, and the other not drinkable."

"Well, well," said Lord R., laughing, "I am sorry for it, but do as you like; if you don't relish my beef and beer, you perhaps will be satisfied with the *cordon bleu*."

The Doctor bowed his assent, and showed it by visiting every friand dish, and pledging all his neighbours with those nectareous draughts he had so praised,—to the no small satisfaction of Lord R., who said he had no doubt they might in time make something of him.

The secret was now out: the Doctor knew where to praise, where to blame; and yet kept up his reputation for bluntness.

At dinner I sat next to a little country gentleman, a neighbour of ours in ———shire. He was

a leader of provincial clubs, and sometimes shone on a race-course. Some high names, both in ton and politics, were here brought to account. Though seldom in London, to hear him, he was intimate with most of them. He assured me, that though he ought at that moment to be on the grand jury at ———, he had lately seen so little of his old friend Lord R., that upon four-and-twenty hours' notice he had put off his journey on purpose to dine with him. "He was so pressing," he said, "that I could not refuse him." This was the truth, but not all the truth; for I happened to know that Lord R. had only invited him to fill up a place at the table, suddenly vacant; and flesh and blood could not resist the temptation of telling his brother-jurymen that his absence was occasioned by Lord R.'s insisting upon his dining with him.

After dinner we of course fell upon politics, and the ministry were of course attacked and defended. One of the assailants was particularly violent against the personal character of the premier; he was a mere fool, if not something worse; unfit to be trusted, and suspected of betraying the people whom he had used as a stepping-stone. He was reproved as too personal in his reprehension. "What motive can I have," said he, "but anxiety for the public good?" Alas!

poor human nature! I afterwards found that the minister's lady had turned her back on the patriot's wife at court. "But do not let that surprise you," said my informant, "for Marshal Ney met his death—that is, he deserted Lewis XVIII., and was shot for it—precisely from the same cause*."

I thought all this very strange, but I found from Etheredge, when I mentioned it to him, that it was very common. "It is inconceivable," said he, "how much may be done or undone by a bow or curtesy, given, or omitted. I have known a man of talent sulk for a twelve-month with a lady of fashion, because she did not acknowledge his salute at the Opera, though the poor offender, being much engaged, really did not see him. Another gifted person, much connected with the press, would never join the world in attacking a celebrated countess, because she had appeared interested in his conversation at a dinner, and on withdrawing, had dropped him a most graceful curtesy. From that time forth, while not unjustly blamed by his contemporary writers for a great deal of *hauteur*, the paper he was connected with always spoke of her as a pattern of condescension."

* He says himself he could not bear the coldness of the court towards his wife, whom he found in tears every night, on account of her reception there.

So far my cousin Etheredge ; which strengthened my theory as to motives.

But my grand illustration arose out of Almack's ; to me a new world then, however satiated with it now. I thought all the patronesses goddesses, and all the young ladies angels. Alas ! what are they now that twenty years have passed over them ! The finest figure I ever saw has become obliterated with fat ; and the smoothest brow that ever beamed is wrinkled with care. This, however, *par parenthèse*.

I speak of young dreams and illusions so pleasant, that I wish I could forget the lessons by which they were accompanied. But no more, at least than this—

“ Gather the rose-buds while you may,
Old Time is still a flying ;
And the fair flow'r that blooms to-day,
To-morrow may be dying.”

I wish all my old partners, or rather their children, would remember this, and believe that nothing will save them from mortification but singleness of heart ; which will always ensure them love and esteem at whatever age. But to return to Almack's.

There had been a great contest among the patronesses, as to the claims of a certain Duchess to be one of that sacred college. The Duchess

was allowed on all hands to be one of the most deserving of the nobility; amiable, discreet, affable (too affable, they said), of the very first rank, and a favourite of the highest personage in the realm.

All this was, as I said, allowed, but the Duchess was not elected. She was reckoned too good, too much above the office, by some of the more modest electresses; by others, (*risum teneatis!*) not fashionable enough. "Yes!" said one of them (who was only a baron's wife), "a person may be a duchess, yet have no fashion." Be this as it may, the Duchess was not elected; and another, inferior indeed, but more fit, they observed, for trouble and business, was put in her place. I saw her *debût*, and as far as dress and diamonds, a condescending manner, and numerous acquaintance were concerned, she seemed to make a sensation. As she passed, she nodded to one, smiled upon another, whispered a third, and had some words of course for every one. With all this she seemed, even to me, comparatively inexperienced, and to be too much at her ease for good breeding: it did not seem to sit naturally upon her, and was easily broke in upon. Accordingly, I could not help remarking a certain force put upon her salutes, when persons of higher quality than herself addressed her. A

prince of the blood caused visible emotion ; and one or two very great ladies visible constraint. Still she was a lady patroness, and received accordingly by her equals in rank, with a fair portion of attention ; and by inferiors, with considerable homage. It was the Lady Longfield, a name as well as person I had known, and ought to have recollected, but did not. I had, however, a cicerone at my elbow, who made every thing easy.

Etheredge knew and was known by everybody.

“ I thought you had known her,” said he, “ for you have seen her at the race-balls at York ; but she was then only in the humbler capacity of commoner, and a mere annual visiter, when London, and still more Almack’s, could not be thought of.”

“ Is it possible ?” cried I. “ I never thought that one of so very common-place a character, and who seemed to be even suing for protection from her superiors, could ever have succeeded to this highest pinnacle of fashionable society, when such a person as the Duchess of —— was rejected.”

“ It is perhaps to that very common-place character,” replied my mentor, “ that she owes her present prosperity.”

Observing me to stare at this, he went on to

say, "When you have served your apprenticeship to this new world of yours, you will find that there are two ways of ascending in the scale of fashion, as well as in almost every thing else. great and commanding superiority from nature : which disdains all subalternship, and takes power by storm ; and an unpretending but patient, persevering humility, which rather sues for encouragement than challenges notice. The first is rather dangerous, because it makes rivals, and therefore enemies ; the other, after often missing its aim, sometimes succeeds. Thus it was with our Countess, who, without pretensions of any kind herself, and married to a man who, with so many lives between him and the earldom, could never have expected to succeed to it, seems to have exceeded all expectation in the place she has acquired ; while the Duchess, whose rank and weight of character would have disturbed, or perhaps extinguished, all the little consequence of the inferior luminaries that sparkle here, was by cabal and intrigue, to our astonishment, refused. You see, then, this very want of pretension has done every thing for her ; for having fortunately no commanding talents, or superior splendour, like the Duchess ; and there being no other candidate ; she was, if I may so say, thrust into the place she fills, with a view

to keep out a more powerful rival. Thus she has in fact been rather admitted into fashion, than acknowledged as legitimately belonging to it. At present she is only on the steps of the temple, while the priestesses engross the altar. Hence she shines by a borrowed light. But if she were to pretend to any illumination of her own, before she accomplishes more power, she would probably be dethroned. At present, indeed, she is extolled to the skies, as a model of modest merit, who must please all ranks; and this they say was the reason of the choice. The real and secret *motive* I have explained to you."

"Your distinctions," said I, "upon this most intricate and interesting subject are profound, as well as clear, and I shall treasure them up. I see I have a great deal to learn."

"A great deal," said he; "but with your curiosity and observation, I have no doubt you will succeed in time. You have of course heard of another fracas among these divinities."

"No, indeed! But pray let me profit by your knowledge."

"You surely have heard," said he, "that the new and now foreign Marchesa di Montebello can never get her new title by her second marriage to be acknowledged in her tickets, by the lady patroness B——, on whom, being her inti-

mate friend, she has generally relied for her admissions. Lady B. at first said that she was only anxious to preserve rules which acknowledged no foreign titles in English subjects, unless confirmed by the sovereign at home. She afterwards allowed she was wrong, and promised to rectify the mistake, but repeated it. Again a remonstrance, again an excuse, and again a repetition. This has produced a quarrel *à l'outrance*, not likely to be made up. The friends of the lady patroness still talk of her zeal for rules ; but some very ill-natured rivals say, that the Marchesa, when only a plain mistress, had the audacity to wonder how so *old* a person as Lady B. came to be made a lady patroness : and, they add, what is worst of all, that Lady B. was very intent upon becoming Marchesa de Montebello herself."

"Now," added Etheredge, "clap that down in your theory of secret motives, and come again to school when you want more."

I thanked him ; and the hour of breaking up having now arrived, the cloaking of the ladies went on with great energy. That the young men should be anxious to guard their partners from the night air, did not surprise me. What did, was to see Colonel —— taking infinite pains to invest his wife with the proper number of shawls

and tippets, accompanied with tender injunctions to take care of herself; all which was most tenderly acknowledged by the object of his solicitude. I own this surprised me the more, as it was known that Colonel —— did not care a farthing for his wife; and she was supposed to have carried friendship as high as it could well go with somebody else. That somebody, too, was in waiting, but at a distance, and studiously took no part.

Etheredge, on seeing my wonder, whispered maliciously, “I quite agree with you. It is remarkable. But don’t you observe her father and mother, who have much to leave, in raptures with his conjugal attentions? And as to the gentleman at a distance, who can now say that he is a chosen *cavaliero servente*, when he will not even put on a shawl for her?”

I admitted Etheredge’s superiority of penetration, and walked away.

On the stairs I met my relation Lord W., a very literary man, who asked me to dinner the next day.

“You know,” said he, “I am a plain and simple person; so you must not expect a Lord R.’s entertainment; but I will give you something intellectual instead.”

He then went on to tell me his party: one was

a poet, another an historian, another a critic of uncommon good judgment, a fourth a profound mathematician.

I almost trembled to appear before such a constellation of talent; but my noble kinsman said that, with discretion, I should do very well: so I accepted the invitation.

"You see," said Lord W., as we descended, "I love to encourage the *beaux esprits* of the age, and all that are distinguished are welcome at my table; I prefer them to dukes and duchesses."

I bowed, whether in assent or dissent, I myself knew not at the time; then carelessly asked if Mr. Lackland, an author whom I heard he patronised, would not be one of the number.

"O no! heaven forbid! He has too much talk himself to let in others, particularly those estimable people I have named. Indeed, I don't affect very great poets or great talkers; but if you can be content, as I am myself, with plain sense and judgment, I think you will like your party."

I saw Etheredge the next day. He said little, but implied much.

"Have a care of shining," said he, "or you will never be asked again to Lord W.'s *intellectual* feasts, any more than Lord R.'s friend T., who complained of the claret, was asked to his sensual

ones. Remember that even at Oxford you learned, as you say yourself, that sage maxim—

‘Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.’

This, our friend Lackland, who came up to take the literary world by storm, has found to his cost.”

Who Lackland was, it may be convenient, as well as consistent with the scope of these recollections, to explain; and I have only to add, that the following little memoir of his mistakes and misfortunes was gathered from his chief friend and adviser, Mr. Gorewell: of whom more hereafter; as, being the friend of Etheredge, he became often the subject of our conversation.

Lackland was learned, ingenious, sanguine; had been distinguished at Alma Mater, and not only wished but expected to be more so in the world. He had gained a prize for most finished Latin verse, and another for English prose. These led to a fellowship; and he might have been happy, had it not been for ambition on the one side, and ignorance of the world on the other.

He had acquired academical honour and academical power; in themselves no mean objects of ambition. But *his* ambition, like all other, failed of its purpose the moment higher, or what were

thought higher, objects interfered, and corroded his quiet.

Tired of his gown, he thought the field of college exertion too contracted, and even that of a learned profession too confined : for he was a man of genius, an aspirer after general fame, and a candidate for possible power in the senate of the State, as well as of the University. Very brilliant examples of success in these views swam perpetually before his eyes, in the recesses of his cloister and the twilight of his library :—rhetoricians, orators, and great civilians, with place, power, name, and often with wealth ; at worst, leaders of the taste of the public, with a high seat in the rank and fashion of London.—All this haunted his imagination. His reputation had spread to the metropolis, and he grew disdainful of college restraints and college companions. He panted to be in another sphere ; and being forced to decide for the church, or give up his fellowship, he resolved upon the latter. He did this without having taken the slight precaution of examining the resources upon which he was to count, until his fortune should be made by letters ; and he arrived in town with the means of perhaps six months' subsistence in his pocket.

This at first did not much affect him ; he had only to grasp his pen, and a mine was opened.

Reviewers and directors of literary works got from three hundred to three thousand a-year. He would begin with the smaller first; but how to be made known to the dispensers of these graces, or, being known, how to obtain them, he had scarcely asked himself. Reputation, however, will always do something for a man at first; and, his object being known, he had offers which, in his situation, he ought not to have despised.

It was proposed to him to take a part in reviews; and examples of high place in the state acquired by writers who had thus begun, tempted him. But he was appalled to find that he was himself to undergo revision, before publication; and he refused. He was then offered the place of literary assistant to a great capitalist; that is, to advise him on the merits of manuscripts. But though himself a writer of genuine taste, he knew absolutely nothing of the taste of the town, and hardly of the age. Some publishers proposed novels. But though he might know the manners of the Greeks, he knew nothing of May Fair; besides, he despised the name. Others offered high for a forcible political pamphlet. But though he knew Thucydides, he had little acquaintance with English parties, except by report, and none at all with foreign polity. He however so far

listened to the conductor of one most influential paper, as to undertake a *fair* and *impartial* review (such was the title submitted to him) of the character and conduct of the different leaders. He did it, and with ability ; but to his consternation he was told, this was by no means what was wanted ; that particular men and particular measures on one side were to be praised, and on the other, abused, whatever the question, or whatever the consequence. He reasoned upon this palpable injustice with the conductor, who, however, only smiled, and told him he had no idea that a man who had got a University prize could be so raw. To his indignation he found that he was considered in the light of a hackney writer, who was to have no opinion of his own, but do as he was bid.

Thus foiled in one of his great objects,—to be a leader of the public sentiment,—he summoned his poetical talents to his aid, and out of old stories, and college exercises, and a re-publication of his prize composition, brought out some pathetic and polished verses, and essays, which gained him at once a popularity he could not have expected.

He who had been almost in want of a dinner now began to be almost fêted. The higher order of his University acquaintance patronized him ;

nay, made him an instrument to procure fresh patronage for themselves, by introducing him as the "New Man of Genius," covered with the laurels of promise. The doors of — house were opened to him, and he was allowed to partake the elegant recherche of both table and boudoir, in Burlington-street. In fact, he became a lion for the time; his pride, which had never abandoned him, even in his eclipse, again unfolded itself, and he looked to a farther enlargement of that reception among the great and fashionable, which had so unexpectedly charmed him. But though he pursued this hope with eagerness, he was far from being thoroughly grounded in the niceties, difficulties, and fluctuations in the life of a man of letters.

That equivocal nondescript, so well known and appreciated in France, is scarcely recognized, and certainly not appreciated, here. The time never came, and never will in England, when a queen, finding Alain Chartier asleep, kissed the mouth which she said had uttered such beautiful strains.

Letters appear to us all a flowery path; and taken as relaxation from severer occupation, they are so. As a duty, and above all, as a *profession*, they become severe themselves. The nectar that is quaffed in moderation, and at intervals, is de-

licious and exhilarating ; made a common beverage, and above all, forced on us against our will, it becomes turbid, flat, and satiating. This Dryden experienced when he contracted to furnish 10,000 lines, for 500*l.* ; a shilling a line !

What must they feel whose pen is destined to provide their daily bread ?

Yet of those, many might have had

“ Hearts once pregnant with celestial fire,”

and might still know what it is to generate

“ Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn,”

but that the necessity of attending to the mechanism of the press, and the stern demands of the stomach, absorb all ideas but those of the printer's devil, and a dinner. All then becomes, as it has been impressively called, “ heartless, reluctant labour,” and their genius languishes, sickens, and dies. Yet, smothered as it is by this necessity, it sometimes peeps out, and they are thought happy in their seducing pursuit ; as Carlin, who so delighted the Parisian world by his humour, was thought to be diverted with it himself, although, at the very moment, consulting his physician on the hypochondriasis that killed him.

It is evident, by what has been said, that no allusion is here made to

“ The mob of gentlemen who write with ease,”

among whom Lackland affected to be enrolled. But the truth could not be disguised, even from himself, who, when he aspired (and most sincerely) to a higher meed, laboured by the same effort to keep himself from starving.

Whether, this being known, had its weight with the higher orders whom he wished to join as allies, but not submit to as patrons ; or whether the patronage of the great is no longer what it was in the time of Pope, Swift, Oxford, and Bolingbroke—a participation of mind on the terms of equality—but merely an ostentation which a man of spirit would repudiate ; certain it is that Lackland, after his *début*, did not get on as he wished, and where he wished. In fact, though he had read Theophrastus, he had never read La Bruyère; or if he had, he had certainly forgotten the following passage :—“ Souvent où le riche parle, et parle de doctrine, c’est aux doctes de se taire, écouter, et applaudir, s’ils veulent du moins ne passer que pour doctes.”

This tact Lackland utterly wanted ; and when he complained, as he did to his friend Gorewell, that no literary person now occupied the place of Addison, Pope, or Swift, he did not understand Gorewell’s reply, “ that those lights of the age were all consummate courtiers, as well as scholars.”

At the same time he imputed, not without reason, much of the blame to the authors themselves, who sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. The flattery of authors, he said, was worse than the condescension of the nobles. Byron laughed at one of the brightest of the present day, (equal almost, or entirely, to himself in real genius,) for "so loving a Lord." Not that by this he meant that a Lord may not be loved; may not be all, and a great deal more (as many of them are), than a poet often is. But there is such a thing as a Wit among Lords, and a Lord among Wits; and the Wit who worships the Lord, quà Lord, and nothing else, deserves all the disappointments he may meet with.

"If you do, however," continued Gorewell, "still aspire to equality, or to be valued for your own personal sake, by these gods of your imagination, let no such notion of equality appear, but "boo, and boo, and boo," like Sir Pertinax*; and write an Epithalamium, which, though stuff, may tell on the strength of your works of real merit. Do this, and you may, perhaps, be tolerated. If *without this* you attempt to *shine* at the expense of your superiors; if in short, you pretend to be anything, you soon will be nothing. If you take my advice, therefore, you will hold by your pub-

* Man of the World.

lisher, and the public, as the best, if not the only real patrons."

This rough lecture was so unpalatable to Lackland, that he tried a thousand ways to elude it by argument, but was silenced by Gorewell's abruptly asking him when he had dined at H—— House, or Burlington-street, last; and he found he had not been invited to either for nine months.

"I suppose," said Gorewell, "it was to give time to add to your progeny—which you have not done. Depend upon it, if you cease to be prolific, you will cease to be remembered. There is, however, another house, where you once almost presided in literary divan, and I need not add deservedly. I mean Lord W.'s. You are now never there?"

"And never will be again."

"You have quarrelled, then," observed Gorewell.

"Yes!"

"And why?"

"A mere foolish dispute about a passage in Homer. But my Lord is no Grecian."

"And you told him so!"

"I certainly did; for who could bear such ignorance? He had, in fact, adopted the Latin translation, which totally perverts the real meaning."

"And this you told him, too?"

“ I did.”

“ Perhaps before company ?”

“ It was at one of his own dinners ; and I proved to the satisfaction of everybody that I was right.”

“ My dear Lackland,” returned Gorewell, “ you have proved to my dissatisfaction, that you are a great blockhead ; and as to your shining as a literary character, in any but literary company, and of your own degree,—take my word for it you will fail.”

“ Yet a man of letters——”

“ Is not a man of fashion, particularly if he lives by them,” said Gorewell.

“ How then are ——, and ——, and ——, so brought forward ?”

“ They had all professions, or fortunes of their own,” rejoined Gorewell, “ or they were in Parliament, or had connexions, or, what is best of all, great public talents. These, good in themselves, are rendered infinitely better by letters ; but letters, though delightful, and often profitable, will not achieve what you want,—the real notice and friendship of the great. That is a phantom which often tempts us to the flood, and there ‘ deprives our sovereignty of reason :’ or rather, it is one of those dazzling exhalations that decoy us out of the safe road, into pits and

bogs, where they are sure to leave us in the mire. No! Amuse the great by your writings, and they will thank you by their civilities; serve them, and they will, *perhaps*, repay your service; but show your parts in correcting them in Homer, and you will infallibly be thrown overboard."

"An encouraging picture!" observed Lackland, rather moodily.

"Yet all I mean," replied Gorewell, "is to cure you, if I can, of the 'flattering unction' you seem to have 'laid to your soul,' that in this commercial, political, money-making and money-spending kingdom, with an aristocracy pushed into exclusiveness by the success of Parvenues, and the inferior ranks corrupted to the core by vanity and ambition, any literary merit, not political, can lead to great preferment; or, that even the voice of a man of letters can be heard amid the storm."

Lackland would have still remonstrated, but Gorewell, whose own views of life had been disappointed, and had made him impatient, told him abruptly to con over Johnson's 'Vanity of Human Wishes,' particularly the lines—

"Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,
Nor think the doom of man revers'd for thee:
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,
And pause awhile from learning, to be wise:

There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail."

Such was the lecture of a man of the world to a man of letters. The man of the world I shall have occasion to mention again : the author, after lingering some time longer in London, and giving proofs of consummate learning in another publication, found his golden dream of ambition at an end. The learning of his work did not suit the public taste ; his great friends were neglected by him from pride, and in return he was forgotten by them ; and he returned to Alma Mater, worse off than when he left her.

It may be supposed that, from what this history discloses, I had not a more favourable opinion of Lord W——, who, it will be recollected, had asked me to dinner.

I was punctual to my engagement, and found my Lord was but right in saying he did not affect wits, but was satisfied with plainness ; for a set of plainer people my conversation never coped withal. What plain meant, in his Lordship's apprehension, I could not, indeed, very well make out ; but certainly, OBVIOUS (one of its meanings) could not have been intended.

Except in one quarter, and that was my Lord's own, there was little discourse, and therefore little opportunity of judging. The poet seemed afraid

of the historian, the historian of the mathematician, and all of them of my Lord ; so, except to eat a very good dinner, and to agree in everything uttered by the noble host, scarce a man opened his mouth. All seemed to have partaken of the lesson which Etheredge had given me, of not attempting to shine ; or if they made the attempt they did not succeed.

What puzzled me was to observe that my noble relation, who was not without a certain degree of talent himself, seemed to enjoy his company. But I soon discovered the secret. All were good listeners and good laughers, and all agreed that my Lord was a good talker. It reminded me of what Walpole said of Richelieu's admirers at Paris, who began to laugh before he had spoken ;—very luckily, as he says—for if they had waited they would not have laughed at all. In fact, they seemed inspired with the true spirit of honest Canton, in that finest of all fine pictures of parasite and patron, which still so charms us, and ever will, though manners are changed.

“ So clever what you say, My Lor.”

The gentleman, in particular, whom Lord W—— had so eulogized for critical judgment, and from whom I expected great things, had but one phrase, which, however, he uttered with much

frequency and emphasis, particularly when my Lord spoke, which was almost the whole time:—
“O! that’s neat! Is not that neat?”

Then the poet, having told my Lord that he had answered his dinner invitation in verse, was called upon to repeat or read it. He said, “he could not repeat, and as to reading it, with such a monotonous voice as his, when my Lord was there, so remarkable for his intonations in the House of Peers, he begged to be excused. But if my Lord would have the goodness”——

“Aye, there you are right,” cried several; “Lord W—— will do you more justice than you can yourself.”

I was particularly amused, and wondered how my noble kinsman would get out of so awkward a position. But he made no difficulty, bowed complacently, and, saying they did him a great deal of honour, went through the composition most sonorously, to the great admiration of the poet, who declared he did not know his own verses again, they were so well delivered. All the company joined in this sentiment, fresh Burgundy was called for, and I never saw my noble relation so pleased. He wound up, however, by telling me he was disappointed that an engagement had prevented a very agreeable man, a Mr. Bland, from making one of the party; for

he had always something new to tell, or some joke to relate. To this all the visitors bowed assent: so that I began to question whether my kinsman and tutor, Etheredge, had been quite correct in what he said about shining. I had however an opportunity of settling this matter the next day, when I saw Etheredge again.

“Here is a new illustration of our question,” said I to him. “I now see what Lord W—— meant by not admitting wits to his banquets, but contenting himself with sense and judgment. You were quite right in your maxim, not to attempt shining before great men.”

“It is not mine,” replied he, “but Lord Halifax’s: not Mountague but Saville, though worthy of both; for both knew the world in their own persons. My Lord Marquis, who you know was called the Trimmer, and, one would think, had studied the art of pleasing as much as Chesterfield, says that ‘*Outdoing* is so near *reproaching*, that it will generally be thought very ill company. Anything that *shineth*, says Lord H——, doth in some measure tarnish everything that standeth next to it.’ After all, I know not that Lord W—— is so much to blame. Not half so much as those, (I must not call them sycophants,) who, for the sake of the honour of being his

guests, condescend (for in some of them it is condescension,) to flatter his vanity."

"What has, however, often puzzled me," I observed, "has been to see men of really fine minds, of real taste and scholarship, take up (to use a vulgar phrase), as they often do, with men at their tables, so inferior to themselves in everything, when they might enjoy all that wit, talent, and literary reputation could assemble around them. I know one in particular, who, after sparkling at court, or in the senate, or feasting his mind with Homer or Sophocles, (for he is a master of Greek,) will descend to, nay often prefer, as his companions at dinner his rusty apothecary, and his still more rusty curate, to the most refined understandings in the land. I own I think this is carrying affability (to which account it is laid) too far.

"I know who you mean," replied Etheredge; "but his real motive is not affability but indolence. He converses with, or rather tolerates, these guests, not from any participation of mind, and still less because, like Lord W——'s, they administer to his vanity; but merely because, having had his mind for hours on the stretch, or having passed the whole morning in solitude, though companionship may be a sort of variety, he wishes

it to press as little as possible upon his powers, —which want relaxation rather than excitement. This is no more, as you no doubt know, than the great Lord Somers used to practise; and he shone as much in public, at least, as any one. Of him, however, it is said, by Swift, ‘that he had very little taste for conversation, to which he preferred the pleasure of reading and thinking, and in the intervals of his time, amused himself with an *illiterate* chaplain, a humble companion, or favourite servant.’ This seems also to have been the case with Prior, as noted by Johnson, who, after shining among the *beaux-esprits* of that enlightened time, would retire to a Life Guardsman, and a pot of porter, in Long Acre.”

“I dare not,” added Etheredge, “allude to your namesake, who so charms us in his books; but you will remember Walpole’s filthy picture of him and his low companions, over a supper of bacon and cold mutton, in the same brown dish, and on a dirty table-cloth. Yet the painter of Sophia, and the husband of his first wife, must not be suspected of any natural predilection for low company. All I mean is, that highly cultivated minds do not *always* prefer highly cultivated company. They like to unbend, as we like to pull off our court dress and indulge in the

ease of a robe-de-chambre. Pray observe, however, that I apply not this to Lord W——.”

“ Nobody will suspect it,” said I.

“ The gentleman who approaches, and is preparing to bow to us,” observed Etheredge, “ will certainly not ; ” and we were joined on the instant by Mr. Bland, whose absence from his dinner, it will be recollected, was so lamented by Lord W——.

Upon being introduced to me I thought him peculiarly obsequious, and towards Etheredge, modest, nay, almost alarmed in his manner, when spoken to. To my surprise, Etheredge asked him if his friend Lord W—— was not coming into office, and to my still greater astonishment, after a little hesitation, and a good deal of winking and smiling, he said, he had heard something about it, but he supposed things were not yet ripe enough for disclosure ; and then, with something like embarrassment, he hastily took his leave.

“ I trust,” said Etheredge, on his departure, “ you fully feel how much you lost in not meeting this smooth gentleman at Lord W——’s.”

“ I should like to know more of him,” said I. “ What is his real character ? ”

“ I know not,” answered Etheredge, “ except, like Pope’s women, that of having ‘ no character

at all.' And yet I think he must have sat to Shakspeare when he drew Touchstone. 'I have trod a measure; I have flattered a lady; I have been politic with my friend; smooth with mine enemy; I have undone three tailors; I have had four quarrels, and like to have fought one.'"

"Capital!" said I; "yet how could Lord W—— be so fond of him?"

"He is his hanger-on," answered Etheredge, "as he is to many others, and I'll wager has now gone to him, either to discover whether what he says he *had heard* of his appointment, (which he never did hear,) is so, or not so; or if not, he will at least have the pleasure of telling his patron what is expected from him by the world."

"Do you mean, then," said I, "that there is not even such a report?"

"Even so," replied my satirical companion; "for, knowing my gentleman's foible, never to appear ignorant of anything, I coined the news at the moment, and shall have the pleasure of hearing it half over the town on his authority, before the day is spent."

"He can never, then, be at a loss," I said.

"Never: witness his propos with a German Elector, who must be nameless."

"Let me hear it, pray," cried I, expecting something good.

“ It was merely,” said Etheredge, “ that in his travels with a certain other noble patron, they went to the Elector’s Court, whose Serene Highness was famous for his houses, one of which, from his fondness for it, was called the *Favorita*. Sir Bland was presented; and the Elector, inquiring good-naturedly what he liked best in his capital, asked him if he had seen the *Favorita*, and whether he approved of his taste. Now it happened that Sir Bland had heard (for he never had seen her) of a very attractive lady, supposed to be high in the Elector’s good graces; so, not to be at a loss, he replied with a bow of assent, that he thought the *Favorita* was the most beautiful woman he had ever beheld! Some of the Court laughed, some were alarmed; but the Elector, being highly diverted by the mistake, it rather did good than harm to Sir Bland, by bringing him into notice; which was what he wanted.”

“ Still,” said I, exceedingly diverted, “ you should not put this amiable aspirant on a false scent.”

“ No harm, I assure you,” replied Etheredge. “ I only wish I could have coined a new joke, as well as a bit of news for him; for he then would have done his day’s work, by carrying both to Lord W., who is a great retailer of other people’s wit, having little of his own. As it is, I mistake

if he has not secured another invitation to dinner, and another panegyric upon his parts and agreeableness, by the gratifying report with which I have furnished him."

"You are cruel," said I.

"Cruel! What, to help a man in his vocation? Why, he lives, or at least lives in good company, upon this very conduct. His pocket-book is at this moment stuffed with *bon mots*, (though a joke, as Sheridan says, 'is no laughing matter in his mouth;') which, with all the gossip of the day, he will repeat, *ore rotundo*, and in a theatrical manner, in the houses of all his grand acquaintance, and the clubs to which he belongs, to their entertainment, and his own profit."

"It is his profession, then," said I.

"Undoubtedly; and to be at the head of one's profession is no small merit. Sir Bland is thus *fêted* and endured among lords and ladies; to the no small astonishment of his own family, who wanted to make him a wholesale linen-draper, like his father."

"Astonishing!" said I.

"Not at all," replied Etheredge: "you will see him higher even than this; for his versatility, as well as indefatigability, in fetching and carrying, among all parties—for he belongs to White's,

Brookes's, and Boodle's—have made him seriously talked of for the 'Guelph';—when he will be *au comble*."

"Yet he did not seem to pay you much court," I observed; "on the contrary, he was rather abashed."

"He knows I have found him out," answered Etheredge; "besides, the man is a *parvenu*; and a *parvenu*, unless possessed of merit, is seldom at ease, except with inferiors."

Our conversation was here interrupted by meeting a tall, hard-featured, and rather ferocious-looking man, who seemed bluntness itself, and, by his talk, a determined enemy to untruth.

"Do not believe it," said Etheredge, when I observed it; "the man is one of that class of self-deceivers, who sometimes so surprise us, that we wonder at our very nature when we see them. Falsehood, even without motive, is so habitual to them, that they could not speak truth if they would. This gentleman told us he came to town yesterday:—he has been in town a week. He told us that he was going to call in Piccadilly:—you see him now walking to Oxford-street. He said he only came up for the Carlton House fête:—to my certain knowledge, he came to attend a lawsuit. He is like Pope;—he cannot ask for

greens without a stratagem. If he shows politeness in begging to fill your glass at dinner, it is because it is the last glass of the bottle, and he will have the first of the next. It is observed, too, when he wants more wine than his share, he always passes the bottle to the right."

We were now greeted by the approach of a person of middle age, and who had anything but a smile on his countenance. "If I mistake not," said Etheredge, "here comes one who will make up for anything you may think wrong in Sir Bland, to whom, as well as to our last acquaintance, he is a marked contrast; and, as you like contrasts, you had better observe him."

The gentleman of whom this was said now came up to us. He was plainly and neatly, but not fashionably dressed; wearing breeches instead of trowsers, brown, but fine thread stockings, high shoes, and a broad-brimmed, shallow-crowned hat, which gave him a very peculiar, if not a very knowing, look.

I took him for a Quaker; but a countenance not very placid, a most decided tone of voice, and a verjuicy expression, contradicted the conjecture. His name was Gorewell, and I was introduced. He was the Gorewell I have already mentioned as Lackland's friend, and I was intro-

duced as Etheredge's relation, who had come to make his first campaign in London.

" I wish it was mine," said he, with emphasis. " What a deal of candied courtesy should I have escaped, and what a number of rascals not seen. However, I suppose Mr. F., like the rest of us, will not take things upon trust, but will see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears, and then"—

" What then ?"

" Why, then he will think of the great people he is come to see, as you and I do."

" Should you not add, little people too ?" said Etheredge.

" To be sure I should," answered he ; " but as to that, you know my opinion : we are all a pack of scoundrels together."

" My cousin and I are much obliged to you," said Etheredge bowing. Gorewell asked him if he remained in town during the Easter recess.

" I am going to see Lord Seton," answered Etheredge.

" Say, rather," cried Gorewell, " to see his fine house, his pictures, his stud, and his hot-houses ; Seton himself is not worth going to see."

" Something in that," returned Etheredge.

" I knew you would say so," observed his friend ; " for it is very well known you think as

I do about most men, great and little : for think not I exclude the little. Here ! here's a charming proof of their pure simplicity ;" and he pulled out a newspaper, which he said had diverted him more than he could have hoped.

It was the reported case of a man who, being sued for a debt, pleaded that he had formerly committed burglary in the house of his own father, for which he had been condemned to be hanged ; but though only transported, the consequence in law was, that he could neither sue nor be sued, and therefore could not be forced to pay.

" What do you think of the rascal ?" asked Gorewell.

" What do you think of his lawyer, who advised him ?" said Etheredge.

" Talking of lawyers," said Gorewell, " I have just received another memento of honesty and virtue in one of them, which I shall certainly frame and glaze, and bequeath to the British Museum when I die. I should premise, however, that having had some business with him as the attorney of another person, I thought I would be civil, and ask him to meet his principal at dinner."

So saying, he pulled out an attorney's bill, which was pretty nearly as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
" To reading your letter, asking me to dinner	0	6	8
Answering ditto, that I would come	0	6	8
Taking a journey of thirty miles to your country seat, to propose your employing me instead of your present Attorney, who could not serve you so well—which you refused	5	5	0
Loss of time	3	3	0
Writing several letters combating your arguments against employing me	2	2	0
Postage of your three letters declining my offers, 6s. 8d. each	1	1	0
	<hr/>		
	£12	4	4
	<hr/>		

" N.B.—If this is thought too much, though allowable in law, I will submit to take 10 guineas."

I must leave the reader to judge with what laughter this admirable composition was read. Etheredge declared it perfect, and said the bill deserved to be paid on account of the genius it exhibited.

" The best of it is," said Gorewell, " that on my refusing, the fellow has actually commenced an action for the money, and disinterestedly advises me to pay it, as to continue the contest would only increase his costs. I am now on the way to Lincoln's Inn, to consult how to shape my defence. Was not Lord Halifax right, then, when he said, ' It is the fools and knaves that make the wheels of the world turn ; and if a man were to call everything by its right name,

he could hardly walk the streets without being knocked down.' I have entered this case in the first class of a list of worthies whose merits I record while in the world, in order to enlighten it when I pass out of it."

As we were congratulating Mr. Gorewell on this accession to his list, his eye caught that of a gentleman who seemed to be snuffing the scent of fresh grass with great avidity and satisfaction.

"These are the pleasures of Nature," said he to Gorewell; "and they are mine. How much preferable to all those you office-people ever enjoy! and always in the power of the happy poor. But when will ambition sate itself?" and then, with an air of great complacency, he walked on.

"Now, to hear that fellow," said Gorewell to Etheredge, "you would suppose him a philosopher, as independent as Diogenes. Was there ever such a contradiction, with his 'ambition,' and his 'happy poor?' Were he really poor, he would die of envy of every rich man he saw; as he now almost does at every man with a title, or in office. All his life long he has been in a constant struggle to raise himself to a level with those above him in station; in which, not to succeed, was bitter mortification. His long-sought object

was office, and high London society; and failing in both, he wrote a moral essay on the pleasures of the country, as the only pleasures fit for a wise man. But, O, strange contradiction! he will *sentimentalize* by the hour with elegant-minded women, and almost believe himself when he does so; yet go home and pass the evening with a fat Dutch Vrouw, his housekeeper, who talks and smells of nothing but herrings."

Here Etheredge and myself burst irresistibly into laughter, which interrupted this interesting picture, and the interruption was continued by meeting one of the highest and best of our nobles.

"Come," said Etheredge, "there, at least, goes one who does not belong to Lord Halifax's classification of fool and knave; which he, and you too, seem to think compose the world. Even you reckon him the soul of honour, and must think him incapable of bribery, or of being bribed, either by money or ambition."

"As to the first," replied Gorewell, "ask his electioneering agents before you decide. With respect to the last, I agree as to the money and ambition, which is saying a great deal; but with all that, (and he here screwed up his mouth,) I am not so sure of his immaculateness in other respects, if you know how to approach him."

“And by what means?” asked Etheredge.

“Find out his ruling passion,” answered Gorewell, “(I own he keeps it well guarded,) and try him by flattery.”

“He is too wise to have one,” said Etheredge, “or if he has, too properly proud even to let it appear.”

“Godolphin was wise, too, and justly conscious of integrity,” returned Gorewell, “yet he cared not to be praised for either.”

“Who would not praise Patricio’s high desert;
His hand unstain’d, his uncorrupted heart;
His comprehensive head, all interests weigh’d,
All Europe saved, yet Britain not betray’d?
He thanks you not,—his pride is in piquet;
Newmarket fame, and judgment at a bet.”

“And what is Lord ——’s pride,” asked I, “if not of his public services?”

Gorewell put his finger to his mouth, and whispered, “Walls have ears, you know, and so may trees; but flatter him on his taste, and his powers in pleasing the ladies, and see whether he is a Cato.”

“There is no making anything of you to-day,” said Etheredge; “you are absolutely incorrigible.”

As our way, however, lay in the same direction as his, through the park, we joined company,

and I proposed no small pleasure to myself in observing the bilious exudations of this my new acquaintance. I was soon gratified. We passed a person reading on one of the benches, whose countenance, as he read, displayed the most perfect complacency I had ever seen. It seemed approbation itself; and I could not help observing upon the happiness of the author, in giving such evident pleasure to his reader.

“It is the author himself,” said Gorewell, with a most Sardonic grin: “he is reading one of his own compositions; and he admires his work in print, as a lady just dressed admires her figure in a glass. See with what a smile he has finished that page; how proudly he shuts the book, and with what elasticity he rises to pursue his walk. He seems to tread in air. I am afraid his publisher will rue it, when the next edition comes out!”

“But who have we here?” cried Etheredge, on the rapid approach of not less than three carriages and four; all in the same livery, arms, mantles, and supporters, and driving furiously towards the bridges.

“He is Lord ——,” said Gorewell, “who seems in such a hurry to get abroad, that one would suppose his creditors were all pursuing him at home. But it is always a mark of greatness to

be in a hurry. A man of power, title, or wealth, cannot consent to anything like tranquillity; it would confound him too much with the *Οἱ Πολλοί*. So at least think their couriers, postillions, and footmen. I beseech ye tell me, you who are philosophers, why greatness is supposed to consist in moving either faster or slower than other men?"

"Of the two," answered Etheredge, "I should think the 'solemn step and slow' best denoted the pomp and importance of the mover."

"Both are ridiculous," said Gorewell, "but particularly the first. This Lord —, now, has no cause whatever for being in a hurry; he knows not even where he is going. That is to be determined at Mons. Dessein's at Calais, if it be not postponed till he gets to Brussels. Then, again, two of his carriages are occupied by his suite, and even his bed, and the materiel of his kitchen; for he is greatly above trusting to the resources of filthy foreigners."

"He is rich, and high titled," said I, venturing a word, "and perhaps may think his luxury does good, by spreading his wealth in the world."

"I doubt the wealth," replied Gorewell, "for the man at this moment has left one minister, and truckled to another, for a very poor place. As to his notion of the *utility* of his luxury to

any one but himself, I much mistake him if ever he was capable of thinking to such an extent. If he were a Roman Emperor, indeed, like Anthony, or had the genius for luxury of Alcibiades, I would forgive him ; for perhaps his luxury might be gilded by talents ; but distinguished for nothing but as Emperor of Humdrum, he is a mere insect with golden wings, without even the power of buzzing."

I was struck with this severity of Gorewell, and Etheredge told him he was worse than ever. At this moment a gentleman (if he was one) passed, who seemed the very personification of the shabby genteel. He was well made, but his coat, which had more dust than nap upon it, seemingly because to dust would certainly be to rent it, was buttoned close from the bottom to the chin, as if to leave in doubt the question, whether his shirt was clean, or whether he had any shirt at all. A much worn hat and trowsers completed the costume of a man seemingly abandoned by the world. Yet there was a fire in his eye which looked as if it could not be quenched. He walked with a firm step and an erect body, though, as he saw Gorewell, he turned his head away, not as in fear, but as if he himself wished to avoid being accosted. A tinge of red also mounted into his sallow cheek as he did it. We

watched him out of sight, when Gorewell, with some compassion, exclaimed—" You will scarcely believe that that person was born to a handsome competence, and might even now be comfortable if he pleased. He has had an excellent education, and has the brightest parts. He was my schoolfellow; but I knew he would never forgive me if I had noticed him in company. He is now taking his solitary walk;—probably the only dinner he will have: yet if he had five guineas in his pocket, he would spend them in a hot supper and punch, in the garret he inhabits, with half a dozen vagabonds like himself."

" Is this your man of education and parts?" cried Etheredge.

" Even so," answered Gorewell; " he might have made his fortune over and over again by them. His conversation is so delightful, if he pleases; his mind teems with so many original and acquired ideas; his classical knowledge and taste are so good, and his mode of communicating himself so clear; that the rich Lord S. once gave him his table and 300*l.* a-year, not as tutor, but merely as a conversational companion to his son."

" What could have made him forfeit it?" was asked.

" Idleness!" replied Gorewell, " sheer and sensual idleness, or rather indolence; to say nothing

of a hatred of the smallest restraint, amounting almost to insanity. The offer of Lord S. was, of all other things that could befall him, what he was most fit for, and we thought would most like. The moment he got it he drooped, became impatient, restless, and jealous ; a bore to himself and everybody else, particularly his pupil. The table was excellent, the company good ; yet would he so yield to his crapulency and love of licence, that he would treat low companions with cheese and porter at a neighbouring public-house. Meantime he seemed to have forgotten the condition of his service—conversation ; for his young charge scarcely ever got a word from him. Yet he rode and walked by himself a great deal. When remonstrated with upon this, he said he had not sold himself ; and his indignation, of which he had a fair portion, kindling, he threw up his office,—and behold him here !”

“ Did he take to nothing else ?” asked Etheridge. “ Did want drive him to nothing ?”

“ Yes ! to enlist.”

“ Enlist !”

“ Even so, and it was then perhaps that he received the best lesson he ever had, from the restraints that were imposed upon him ; and he would have deserted, and probably been shot, but for another extraordinary circumstance.”

“ Pray let us have it.”

“ He was sentry at an inn-door where his officers were quartered. They were literary, and their wine made them talk of Anacreon. There was a dispute about a passage which they could not settle. His captain said he would call up one who knew more about it than all of them put together ; and, to their astonishment, he sent for the sentry, who explained it with ease. To end a long story, they asked his history, and though he did not deserve it, clubbed interest and purses to obtain his discharge.”

“ Wonders will never cease,” we exclaimed.

“ The greatest is to come,” replied Gorewell : “ for expostulating with him as a friend, and willing to save him if I could, I proposed the fairest undertakings to him, all of which he eluded ; till thinking it might arise from want of present relief, I named a sum, not inconsiderable for me, which I told him I would hold at his service. His answer was memorable : ‘ Keep your money ; I will not swindle you ; which I should do if I took it, knowing that my grossness and folly are incurable, and it would therefore be thrown away.’ How he has lived since, I know not ; but it is not a bad maxim to let people, if they must go to the devil, do it in their own way.”

We were really affected by this remarkable

history, and passed some time in silent reflection, when our attention was engaged by two promising-looking young men, who saluted Gorewell as they passed.

“ Two boys I am disposed to like,” said Gorewell.

“ They are eminently fortunate,” said Etheredge.

“ Why, they deserve something for their independence,” returned the Cynic, if Cynic we can now call him ; “ for they have neither of them bread and cheese of their own, yet each has lately given up a tolerable situation—one, because he did not like his patron ; the other, because his patron liked him.”

“ Paradoxical enough, and the last rather extraordinary,” observed Etheredge.

“ Yes ! but what would you have a young fellow do, whose master never let him alone ; and not content with strict office hours, pinned him to his sleeve, as a wife sometimes ties her husband to her apron-string ? He could neither eat, drink, nor sleep, walk or ride, without first asking leave of his patron, who was jealous of his attentions, and could or would do nothing without him, public or private. Moreover, having the *cacoëthes scribendi* upon him, he kept him up half of every night in coining phrases, and mending

sentences: what Voltaire used to call washing the King of Prussia's dirty linen."

"And what was the fate of your other friend?" asked Etheredge.

"Why, there was a lady in the case."

"O! then I am answered."

"Not as you imagine," continued Gorewell. "My friend was a little Secretary to a great one, whose wife complained that he would not convey lace and silk in his franks for her; and, moreover, would not walk out with the children when the nurses sunned them in the Park. Last, and not least, that he ate too many sweetmeats, and drank too much Tokay, when there was company; all which was allowed without reproof by the patron, who, between ourselves, was himself patronized, or in other words, governed, by his wife."

Etheredge then changing the conversation, asked Gorewell why they had not seen him lately at G—— House?

"The owner," returned Gorewell, "may answer that question. He bores me with Newmarket and the Racing Calendar; and what was said at White's, or done at Tattersall's: then his wife ——"

"What! another lady?"

"Yes! She talks teapots and Buhl. One would think her drawing-room Hanway-yard;

and as for teapots, she showed me seventeen of them all in a row, and would have told me the history of every one of them, had I not escaped."

"Reason enough," observed Etheredge, "for leaving them off. But what has that worshipper of vellum and broad margins, Sir Elziver Page, done to you; for he told me you had left him off too? Yet he has a fine library, on which I know he used to consult you."

"O! I have cut him as a book man, ever since he told me he had got a bargain of an Herodotus, Gronovius edition, with *Variorum's* notes."

"But you no doubt continue your intimacy with Lord Pindar," said Etheredge; "he too does not bore you?"

"There are different sorts of bores," answered Gorewell, shaking his head. "What do you think of his asking me to fix a day to give my advice on an Epic Poem he was writing, in twelve Cantos, on the 'Participation of Poland?'"

"O, dreadful!" returned Etheredge. "But I did not know he was a poet, as well as a dabbler in prose."

"Nor I till now; but the reason is best of all," said Gorewell, "and I, it seems, was the unhappy cause of it."

"You astonish me," answered Etheredge: "What have you not to answer for?"

“ I am as innocent as the child unborn,” said Gorewell; “ but you shall hear. Last year he insisted upon my reading his two volumes quarto, on ‘ The True Nature of Government.’ I dipped into them to oblige him, but unfortunately told him I thought his genius did not suit prose. ‘ In that case,’ as he told me afterwards, ‘ it must suit poetry, or I shall have no genius at all.’ ”

“ Admirable ! ” we cried; and Gorewell having made his hits for the morning, took his leave, to gather more food for his bitter fancy, at Lincoln’s Inn.

“ He is quite a Heraclitus,” I remarked, when we separated.

“ Rather Democritus,” said Etheredge; “ for he was not always thus sour, though irritable enough. I remember him much like other men of the world,—with which he had not then quarrelled; and when he wore a hat, manners, and opinions not distinguished from the rest.”

“ And what has changed him ? ” said I.

“ Disappointment: not in love, not in ambition, but in friendship. He thought himself ill-treated by his earliest friend; and being of a very high spirit, revenged himself by scorning him, and at length all mankind.”

“ I had hoped for something more respect-

able," said I, "however erroneous, as a cause for so great a change. But what's the history?"

"He was a sort of Cassius," continued Etheredge; "'born free as Cæsar, had fed as well, and could bear the winter's cold as well he;' but he could not, any more than Cassius, bear to see 'Cæsar a God, and himself a wretched creature, that must bend his body if Cæsar carelessly but nod on him.' In short, he and Fortunatus were schoolfellows and fellow-collegians, both romantic enough to swear eternal friendship on the banks of the Isis, where, as I have sometimes heard him repeat, at first with tears in his eyes,—

‘ Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
They drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray fly winds his sultry horn.’

In other words, they had the same studies and pursuits, and, as they thought, the same dispositions and views; and happy were those days. No lurking suspicion or fear of change then tainted their purity of feeling, or checked the full tide of their confidence and affection. And yet, though their occupations and amusements were the same, the real characters they thought so alike, were essentially different. One was pliant, if not dissembling; the other open, if not intractable. One was more vain than proud; the

other more proud than vain. Gorewell had fortune, but wanted connection; his friend, high connexions, but little fortune. One,—as the old Marquis of Winchester said of himself, after being thirty years Treasurer to Henry VII. and Henry VIII., Mary, and Elizabeth—was ‘*ortux à salice* ;’ the other decidedly ‘*ex quercu*.’* But little as this was discoverable to themselves at the time, it told afterwards in the world.

“ Both took to politics; but the friend took the lead in rank, though Gorewell performed more essential duty. All thought Gorewell’s services deserved promotion; his friend got it without service. Jealousy began, and the Isis vows were forgotten. Gorewell remained a subaltern, his friend became a minister.

“ Here all was at an end. Gorewell’s superiority was allowed, but felt to be onerous; Fortunatus’s slight of it was resented as an affront. There were changes of office in a change of parties. Fortunatus’s connexion kept him in power; he was even consulted as to Gorewell, and Gorewell was thrown overboard. Fortunatus was condemned, abused, and despised; Gorewell was praised, esteemed, and turned out. From that moment, as a natural consequence, though he

* The reason given by Winchester himself for his success. 77

had so often filled the public eye, he was neglected and forgotten ; and having asked a favour, not for himself, but another, was refused. But do not be surprised at this, for you have here only an epitome of very common transactions among those who are supposed to be the leaders of mankind. All that we can say is, let not the youth, before he sees the world, confide in his own strength, or in other men's after he gets into it."

"You have given me," said I, "a very fearful, but I trust not an absolutely exact picture of even the political world, where it is said every thing is

'So slippery that the fear's as bad as falling.'"

"Would I could say," returned Etheredge, "that the picture is false, or that it is not applicable to other divisions of life, as well as the political ! You are surely, however, not such a Tyro as to wonder that when service has done what was expected of it, and is no longer wanted, the servant is abandoned even to oblivion, unless he has resources of his own, like Gorewell. But, unluckily, those resources, though they must ever rescue him from insignificance, are not of a character to make friends ; and, accordingly, from the turn he has taken, he is more feared than loved."

“It is lamentable,” said I, “that so much intrinsic merit as we see there should be shipwrecked, and such a man sink into a humourist, while Fortunatus ——”

“Has greatness thrust upon him,” continued Etheredge. “But ‘it is the bright day brings forth the adder;’ so thought Brutus when he resolved to kill Cæsar, and so thinks Gorewell, when he rails at mankind. There, however, goes Moroso, a railer of a very different kind, in comparison to whom, Gorewell is good-nature itself. Indeed, Gorewell, though a severe censor, is any thing but really ill-natured. His blame is of the world at large, or of known crimes, or proved demerits: ‘his taxing, therefore, like a wild goose, flies unclaimed by any man.’ But Moroso, of whom I would advise you to be cautious, makes every thing personal. His sneer would be deadly, and his bite a serpent’s, but that his defamation and abusive tongue are so well known as to be proverbial, and he therefore wants one necessary ingredient to make it efficacious — Truth. If he *could* speak you fair he would; but only the better to deceive you, while preparing an attack to be made upon you in public or in private, unawares. Luckily his looks as well as his nature prevent him from even assuming the appearance of honesty; and as the matchless

impudence of Chartres exempted him from the charge of hypocrisy, so the innate venom of Moroso takes from him all possibility of feigning. Thus he stands confessed in all his ugliness; the loud denouncer of every thing public, and the malignant calumniator of every thing private."

"You frighten me," said I. "But why, if the danger be so visible, counsel me to beware of him?"

"I only wish you to shun him," replied Etheredge, "as Gulliver did the Yahoos who climbed trees in order the better to scatter their filth upon those below. Be assured that Moroso is a thorough Yahoo. But let us come to pleasanter things. Where do you dispose of yourself at dinner to-day?"

"In a family," said I, "where I am told I shall have food for observation: the C——s."

The C——s were celebrated, as they said themselves, for small, but the most select parties in London. C—— had been twice to Paris to get his cook, who would not engage, except upon a promise that, when a turtle was to be drest, he should be allowed the juice of nine hams as a stimulant to the sea monster. With this, C—— thought he had a right to the best company in the empire. His wife, upon the strength of a thousand a year pin-money, an Opera-box, and

lace of ten guineas a-yard, which all the world went to see, thought so too.

Upon this occasion the C——s resolved to outdo themselves, and sup in the Apollo. They gave out that they had merely a few intimate friends, among whom, on account of some electioneering interest of my father, I was allowed to be a visiter. The *recherche*, however, could not be for me ; neither was it for the Marquis of Wilmington, though he had kindly, they said, promised to come. It was the Marchioness and Lady Laura their daughter, who were the deities to whom this worship was to be offered. So my tact discovered, in the quarter of an hour (that malignant star to an Englishman,) before dinner. The dear Marchioness and charming Laura, whose acquaintance Mrs. C—— had made at Spa, had promised to come to them in a *family way*, when they returned to England ; but so much were they engaged, they had not been able to comply till now. The lady of the house, whose apparent composure had assumed a doubtful hue for some time at the non-arrival of her guests, absolutely turned pale when the pendule on the chimney struck half-past eight.

“ Dear me ! I hope no accident ! Yet at Spa she was always so punctual to four. Well ! these fine people —”

At that moment the welcome knock was heard, and all was hushed, except by Mrs. C—— desiring one of the lady guests, the wife of a double *millionaire* of the City, whom she had invited on purpose to show her the Wilmingtons, to observe whether she ever saw manners so charming, so affable, and every way so perfect as those of the Marchioness and Lady Laura ? The door opened, and Mrs. C—— advanced with eagerness to meet her friends, and all our expectations (my own in particular), were on tiptoe. What was our surprise, and Mrs. C——'s grief, to find that the Marquis alone had favoured her, and that the meditated display (for such I found it now to be, to say nothing of the nine hams), had failed.

The Marquis, a portly and rather loud man, assured his hostess that it was not his Lady's fault, but that of a terrible and sudden attack on the *trachea*, which sometimes turned, he said, to quinsey ; of which she had, unfortunately, a particular dread ; so that she sometimes would give up the Duchess her mother's parties, to avoid danger.

“ I assure you,” continued he, “ she has been nursing it the whole day, in the hope of waiting upon her old Spa friend.”

“ I am most truly sorry,” said Mrs. C——, (and the truth of the sorrow was certainly not

feigned). “ But dear Lady Laura ! what has detained her ? I had hoped to have been favoured. She is not afraid of quinsy, I trust ! ”

“ O, no ! ” replied the Marquis, “ I ought to have remembered ; but, as you know, she is so good a daughter, she could not think of leaving her mother while so ill. ”

Mrs. C—— wished that Lady Laura had not been quite so good a daughter : but asked with as much concern as she could, “ Whether Lady Wilmington kept her bed ? ”

“ Not positively her bed,” said the Marquis ; “ but the sofa—never stirs from the sofa ;—they are both, indeed, very, very sorry. ”

“ They were always good,” returned Mrs. C—— with much concern, and some mortification in her countenance ; but whether for the Marchioness’s *trachea*, or the loss of her company, I could not exactly make out.

That evening I went to a ball at Carlton House, and to my astonishment, who should I find but Lady Laura, whom I congratulated upon it, as I supposed it indicated that her mother was recovered.

“ She is in the next room,” said the young Lady ; “ but, indeed, she is very ill ; only as I had moped with her, she said, the whole day, she insisted upon my coming here ; and having in

vain sought for a chaperon, came herself, though so poorly. She is, indeed, a very good mamma."

" And Mrs. C—— ! "

" O ! we were very fond of her at Spa ; and she is very rich, and dresses most expensively, and all that ; but somehow or other, this London is so large a place, and there are so many engagements, that one has not time to see one's friends. "

I admitted the cogency of this ; and her partner claiming her, I remained in her place to watch her further progress, and in this occupation was found by Etheredge.

" You are not the first man," said my shrewd mentor, " who has watched the movements of that very charming person, to whom, I observe, you have been paying close attention ; nor am I surprised at it. "

" Truly " I replied, " I am very much obliged to you for taking such an interest in me. It does not arise, I trust, from your thinking me in danger from her charms. In truth, I own I had a particular reason for watching her just now : " and retiring with him into a recess, in which the rest of the brilliant throng were too busy to join us, I recounted all that had passed at the dinner visit at Mrs. C——'s, which I owned I could

not make out. "I cannot believe," said I, "that with such ingenuous looks and manners, so much beauty and such accomplishments as seem to belong to Lady Laura, there can be anything dishonest, or even capricious in her."

"You are still half a century, I see, behind the world," replied Etheredge; "thanks to your country education (for I do not call Oxford any thing). Watch a little longer, and perhaps you may change your opinion. Meanwhile, shall I tell you the short dialogue I have just overheard between her and her mother, after her partner had resigned her to her care? She had been dancing, you see, with Sir George ——, a man of some consequence, and the husband of a peeress in her own right, but whom, having come late, she had accepted only *faute de mieux*. She danced indolently enough; her mother remarked it, and asked why she had been so inanimate?"

"‘My dear mamma,’ said she, ‘how can you be so blind? Do you think I would dance my hair out of curl for a married man?’ So much for her dignity! Then as to Mrs. C——, she is not the first to whom these Wilmingtons, (and, indeed, many others to other C——s) have thought it proper to be civil abroad, and slight at home. There are, however, two sides in this as in every thing else.”

“ Your meaning ? ” said I.

“ Why that Mrs. C — is but rightly served, after all. She was originally an absolute tradeswoman ; nay, stare as you will, located in a distant province, and married for her beauty by a rich country manufacturer, who was then not so rich as he afterwards became. They removed to town, where they found nothing wanting but high society ; and not contenting themselves (for C — was as great a fool in this as his wife,) with being the first of their class, preferred a second, or even a third, or fourth place, in a higher one. For this object they adopted a plan, not at all uncommon with persons of this character, and made one of the many rich English obscures, who fly from one end of the Continent to the other, to make their way, on the score of their display, to the society of foreign princes, and such of the *haute noblesse* of their own country as they can catch. These last serve them as they deserve : they accept their homage—not the less agreeable by coming from the owners of three, perhaps four travelling-carriages, and a dozen servants—but as soon as they return to the true scene of action, London, all is altered, and the awkward position arises, to know how to drop them without downright affront.”

I made Etheredge a low bow upon this his

clear exposition of the motives of petty ambition ; acknowledged him as my master in the art of developing characters ; and hoped he would continue his pastoral care of my education, which, I agreed with him, had been so much prejudiced by the opposite views of my father.

A gentleman now passed by, in the suite of one of the princes, of a singularly retired manner ; unlike most of the company, rather shrinking from, than courting, notice. He was silent, but by no means stately ; serious in his look, mien, and manner, but markedly respectful to all who spoke to him.

“ It is Mr. Sedley,” said Etheredge, “ or rather, Sir George.”

“ The most modest person,” I observed, “ I ever remember to have seen.”

“ The vainest man alive,” said Etheredge : “ vain of his modesty, which is often the worst of all vanities. There is not one of the persons before whom he seems so retiring, to whom he does not think himself superior. At a dinner, you can never get him in or out of a room before you ; and he is sure to take the lowest place at the table, being as sure of being called to the top ; which if he is, he makes a thousand excuses ; if not, sits doggedly silent.”

“ He must be very foolish,” said I.

“On the contrary,” said Etheredge, “he is a very sensible person, and might be most estimable but for this nonsense. He is a Grand Cross of a foreign order, but never wears it; and professes to be sadly ashamed of being forced to appear in that fine coat he has on.”

Lady Laura now again came near us, and looked so well, and was so well dressed, that I could not help observing, I could scarcely believe in such a harsh opinion as Etheredge professed to have of her; as a proof of which, I bade him remark the numerous band of homagers that surrounded her.

“She is in her element,” said he, “in public; and even in her boudoir she might charm you with her music, dazzle you with her paintings, talk to you in tolerable French, a little in Italian, and a little in German; and yet send you away with impressions —”

“Too dangerous, perhaps, for my peace!”

“Not so; though it might be, but for one little want—”

“For Heaven’s sake, what?”

“Mind!”

“Astonishing!”

“Not so, again; for, from her example, I am persuaded that a woman may sing like Grassini, play like Kalkbrenner, dance like Mercandotti,

and even talk Goethe, without that essential requisite for all that can make her valuable as a companion—mind. Lady Laura has a certain quantity of what is called talent ; but she would read Shakspeare through, without an observation. She has passed her life, to quote an observing Frenchman, ‘ à étudier l’art de substituer la beauté de convention, à la beauté primitive et simple de la nature *.’ She would sit up all night at a concert ; but close her window if the nightingale was there. She doats upon admiration, especially in public ; yet if you talked to her of the pleasures of mutual attachment in *retreat*, she would not understand you. In short, if she marries, it will be for the same reason that her mother married her father—in order to get rid of him.”

I laughed at this ridicule, yet did not like it ; but all remonstrance was prevented by the approach of a lady, so overbearing in her beauty, that she was sometimes christened the ‘ Countess of Stare†.’ “ Here, however, comes one,” said I, “ who looks, should you attack her, as if she would give you your own. See how she dashes round

* D’Olbreuse, ou l’Homme du Siècle.

† Positively, on the word of an honest Editor, no allusion, still less disrespect, to any Countess that spells her name “ Stair.”

the circle, looking anything but tranquillity. Her eyes have a keenness amounting to ferocity; she appears to challenge, to gasp for notice, and sets both men and women, and almost royalty itself, at defiance."

"You paint her well," said Etheredge: "she has not even Lady Laura's artificial manners. So far she is honest; and because she was once told her eyes were basilisks, she seems to think she can strike people dead. She

‘ O’ersteps the modesty of Nature.’

Alas! How are those women mistaken who do so! She is the ‘Dorinda’ of Garth,

‘ Whose sparkling wit and eyes
United, cast too fierce a light,
Which blazes high, but quickly dies,
Pains not the heart, but hurts the sight.’”

"Why, what severity is this?" said I, half angry at his being so splenetic; to say nothing of his abuse of Lady Laura. "The women, I see, will get nothing of you to-night; you are an absolute cynic. Is there really no one, in all this numerous and splendid bevy, that can claim your good word?"

"Yes! there is one," cried he, with emphasis; and I almost thought, with a sigh; "and if there

were more like her—with Swift, for the sake of Arbuthnot—I would burn my travels.”

“Am I to seek for her,” asked I, “amidst all this brilliancy, or will you point her out?”

“Seek, and you will find,” said he, “for you cannot mistake: though, I avow there are so many pseudo Lady Isabels in such circles as these, that a person not knowing her may be deceived. But (as the children say) *you burn already.*”

“What! in white, with roses in her hair?”

“Go on,” said he, fixing his eye upon a lady, as if enchanted.

“That hair,” I continued, “auburn; but with the finest dark eyes imaginable!”

“You burn,” said he, “I tell you; but go on.”

“And then a shape, a form, a motion, a walk, so graceful, yet so retiring—so commanding, yet so modest!”

“Excellent!” cried he.

“But with a look,” I added, “that crowns all the rest with sweetness; and altogether, such a combination of high quality and natural simplicity as I never before saw.”

“My dear fellow,” exclaimed Etheredge, “I could embrace you for this animated picture of the person I admire most, and could love best in the world!” And with that he sighed deeply.

" *Could* love !"

" Yes, could, but dare not. Poor Lady Laura ! I see you have already forgotten her for Isabel. How easy to do so ! the one all semblance, the other all reality ; the one the show-glass of fashion, and of that only ; the other the pride of nobility and nature conjoined."

" Your distinction," said I, " is as forcible as it is eloquent ; and as I see more of her, I think you have not said enough."

" She is, indeed, a perfect lady," observed he : " formed to be, as now, the grace and ornament of the most dazzling Court in Europe. What would you have said, had you seen her as I first did, among walks and flowers, ' by a forest side or fountain,' amid vine-clad hills, and verdant valleys, herself fresher than the freshest, and enjoying Nature, as if Nature's favourite daughter ? Her whole person was then, as it is now, fragrant with youth and health : no ermine so pure, no rose so sweet. Her symmetry reminded me of Milton :

' Dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy.'

Her looks and breathing, of Shakspeare :

' Your eyes are loadstars, and your tongue sweet air.'

Yes ! the walks where I first saw her will never be effaced from my memory."

"This is new, indeed," I observed, "in you ! and those portentous words, '*could* love, but *dare not* !' what mean they ?"

"Exactly what they imply."

"What !" I replied, "is the gallant Ether-edge come to this ?

'Would'st thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting I *dare* not, wait upon I *would*,
Like the poor cat i' the adage ?'"

"Too true," said he. "She is, indeed, the ornament of life ;" and he eyed her again, surrounded by the élite of the assembly. "Pray tell me ! you watched Lady Laura and her homagers, who were quite as numerous as here ; but do you observe no difference ?"

"It is not easy," I said, "where almost everything outward is conventionally the same ; but I certainly do mark a difference, which, perhaps, would not strike every one as it does me."

"What is it ?" cried he, with eagerness, and as I thought, with something like a triumph of expectation.

"There is," said I, "a respect, a devotional, yet seemingly kind regard in the one, and some-

thing like flippancy in the other. Lady Isabel's admirers appear to be sincere in their devotion, and to think of her alone ; Lady Laura's to address her *pour passer le temps*, and thinking only of themselves."

"My dear friend," cried Etheredge, "you are an oracle. It was precisely this *sincerity*, this devotion of respect in the attentions of those who approached her, that struck me when first I beheld and loved her :—for both were at the same moment."

"This from you!" said I, "who laugh at all the world, particularly the lovers in it? At least it cannot be an old passion, or we should have known it. Two days perhaps?"

"Twelve months," said he, and sighed again.

"And you never *told* your love?"

"Never spoke to her in my life."

"How is this?" cried I, more and more amazed.

"I would not even be introduced."

"Nay, now, I cannot understand you."

"All prudence, I assure you," returned he. "In the first place, the sister of a marquis, though he had been my early friend, could never be made for a miserable baronet; and something told me that mere acquaintance would never satisfy me, for I should instantly desire more. In the next place, she is now not two-and-twenty, *I* two-and-

thirty. Last and not least, she is as beloved for her amenity, as worshipped for her beauty ; I, feared, and probably detested, for supposed misanthropy, though anything but a misanthrope. No ! I knew how little I had to hope, and studiously avoided her intimacy. To tell the truth, too, I have inquired much about her since, with the charitable view of discovering some fault which might cure me ; but I cannot find even an imperfection. She has the curse of the Gospel upon her, for everybody speaks well of her. It was of her certainly that La Bruyère wrote by anticipation, two hundred years ago, that touching description, which so wound into my heart, that I swore I would never marry until I met with the person of whom it was the prototype."

" Pray give us the description," said I.

" I have long got it by heart," answered he, " so look with all your eyes while I recite it. La Bruyère had been describing a Lady Laura, when he suddenly broke out with this—
' Il y a dans quelques autres une grandeur simple, naturelle, indépendante du geste, et de la démarche, qui a sa source dans le cœur, et qui est comme une suite de leur haute naissance. Un *mérite paisible*, mais solide, accompagnée de mille vertus qu'elles ne peuvent couvrir de toute

leur modestie, qui échappent, et qui se montrent à ceux qui ont des yeux.’”

“This makes up,” said I, “for half the treasons you have uttered against the sex. I now see why you so vituperate Lady Laura, whom, as well as so many others, you seem to be sacrificing to Lady Isabel’s superiority; as Achilles sacrificed his prisoners to the manes of Patroclus.”

“Lady Isabel,” answered he, “needs no sacrifice to make her superiority conspicuous, and perhaps would hate me for valuing none because *she* exceeds everybody.”

He would have gone on, but at that moment the object of all this eulogy from him who disapproved of most, and praised none, approached, leaning on the arm of her brother. To say how the modest dignity of her mien and manner outshone that of Lady Laura, would only be to echo a very general sentiment. High-minded, but poor Etheredge! his resolution was gone in a moment. Nor could I wonder; for being a very old acquaintance and fellow-collegian of the Marquis, an introduction to the sister could not now be avoided, and took place as almost of course. Yet it was no common one on either side. I was struck, and almost amused, at seeing the redoubtable Etheredge, whose discriminating

judgment and keen eye most persons feared, absolutely abashed. He reddened, and even stammered, in uttering the common phrases necessary on an occasion; to others so common, to him so trying. Not so the object of his admiration, who, with all the self-possession which *he* wanted, but mingled with that natural sweetness which no other woman ever had, reminded him that they had met before in scenes very different from this. To this he assented, and would have said something about the pastoral valleys, and the banks of the Rhine; but his voice failed, and I really feared he was ill. Strange as it appeared, at least to me, it was the very sincerity of his admiration that was his enemy; for never did lover present himself for a first time to his mistress under such disadvantage. It was therefore with joy that I saw the party pass on, after the Marquis had begged him to renew their old acquaintance by visiting him in town. "As you seem fond of the Rhine," said he, "I will show you some drawings of it, which I think you will like; and if you do, as she knows you are an artist, it will please Lady Isabel, whose works in fact they are."

This called up an ingenuous blush on the cheek of the Lady, and completed (if it wanted completion,) the thralldom and confusion of my once

bold cousin. He seemed, indeed, the reverse of Cymon; for his Iphigenia, instead of animating him into increased energy, appeared to have damped all that which he really possessed.

I know not if those who may read this story will like it well enough to wish me to proceed. But as I like it myself, I shall probably return to it hereafter. At present I hasten to the great subject at large, as it will be learnedly treated in the Second Part of these memoirs.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART II.

TO THE — — —

WHO, THOUGH HER MODEST NATURE MAY PREVENT HER DISCOVER-
ING IT, WAS THE PROTOTYPE OF THE LADY ISABEL DESCRIBED
IN THEM, THESE PAGES ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

OF LOVE.

LOVERS, COQUETS, MARRIAGE, AND OTHER SUCH
MATTERS, INTERESTING TO ALL YOUNG PEOPLE,
AND PERHAPS TO SOME OLD ONES.

Old as I am, for ladies' love unfit,
The power of beauty I remember yet,
Which once inflam'd my soul, and still inspires my wit.

DRYDEN.

I HAVE no doubt that the little incipient love-tale
with which I closed the first part of these my
lucubrations, will be thought much the most
amusing of all I have hitherto presented to the
reader; and I apprehend that, from its title, this
Second Part will be thought by far the most in-
teresting division of my memoirs. As my first

anecdote, however, relates to myself, I must preface it with a confession, of which I am not a little ashamed, but which truth compels me to make.

Will the reader be surprised (if he knows any thing of the heart he will not), that, spite of Etheredge's admonitions, I fell in love with Lady Laura? To be sure, my Mentor was absent on an affair of his own; but he found me deep on his return.

Much was to be said for me. The death of an uncle, soon after that of my father, had more than doubled my fortune, which was large before; and the Wilmingtons were perpetually inviting me. I could not find out whether Lady Laura did or did not approve this. I believe she thought me not accomplished enough; yet she encouraged me. But she was a coquet, and I need say no more. Perpetual meetings, and perpetual display, added to this encouragement, did much against me. I was but three-and-twenty, and my fascination came on unawares. I forgot all Etheredge's warnings, or, as I thought them, prejudices. "He is too much occupied with another," I said, "to see her real merit." In short, I grew what is called in love.

Now every one knows, who knows any thing, that this sort of position is reducible to no fixed principle. It defies reason, prudence, foresight,

or inquiry, to say how it comes, and certainly how it goes: for go it does, as suddenly as it comes. In short, it cannot be analyzed, though it may be described; and I only pretend to describe.

What says La Bruyère? “*L’amour naît brusquement, sans autre réflexion, par tempérament ou par foiblesse.*” If so, how can I be blamed for loving Lady Laura? “*Un trait de beauté nous fixe, nous détermine;*” and my authority goes on to say, that while friendship proceeds by slow degrees, and requires years of good offices to bring it to perfection, a beautiful face, or a beautiful hand may, in love, effect it in a moment. La Bruyère ought to have added, and I wonder he did not, that the beautiful face or hand occasioning the fit, defies, while it lasts, all antecedent caution; nay, perhaps, or probably, such caution may tend much to produce the very dilemma it was intended to prevent. To finish the comment, he ought to have told you that, as what he was talking of was merely capricious love, it might cease as unaccountably as it arose.

“A look may banish, as a look create.”

How it is created, when, and to what extent, in what given time, and how soon, and from what causes it may be extinguished, have escaped all

the treatises of all the moral philosophers that have written upon human nature. It is, indeed, not only extraordinary, but baffles all reasoning, to make out of what gossamer materials, and what fineness of texture, its web is composed ; how capricious it seems, how weak, how strong, how impossible, how easy to break through. But hear Romeo, who calls it—

“ Any thing, of nothing first created ;
A heavy lightness, serious vanity ;
Misshapen chaos of wellseeming forms ;
Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health ;
Still waking sleep, that is not what it is ! ”

If this baffled poor Romeo, well may it me ; so I give that part of the matter up, and confine myself to facts, as Bacon confined Natural Philosophy to experiment.

My first question then shall be, How is the love we are treating of detected ?

This, perhaps, is the easiest part of the inquiry, unless it be the case of a practised coquet ; which character let no one, not even Bacon himself, pretend to understand, though he may know all the properties of quicksilver. But for an unpractised boy or girl, in vain do they sometimes think to conceal from themselves the growing empire which so pleases them. We may apply to them the eloquent passage of Addison, that de-

scribes " the secret overflowings of gladness which diffuse themselves through the mind when we behold gay scenes of Nature on the return of the Spring." The difference is, that everybody knows what the Spring is, not everybody what indicates love.

The colouring at the unexpected entrance of a favoured object, nay, at the mere sound of his name, has told a secret in a moment, which has, perhaps, been kept a twelvemonth; and I once knew an affection disclosed by the sudden pause (as sometimes happens), in a general conversation which left an unfortunate pair without notice, who instantly dropped their voices, and became abashed, so as to challenge everybody's remark. Had they boldly continued their subject, they might have escaped; but their consciousness, and consequent confusion, betrayed them.

One young lady betrayed herself when talking of the musical talents of a certain gentleman, by simply saying he played well, but that *he* played better. Being asked whom she meant by the second *he*, her face became suffused, and she hesitatingly named a young soldier whom she knew. All the world gave them instantly to one another: and the conclusion was afterwards verified.

Another lady, still more unlucky (or lucky, I

don't know which), allowed her secret to escape thus. The gentleman it seems was diffident ; and though he had sufficiently shown his passion, had never declared it. One morning he gave her a rose, and modestly asked her, " If she did not think it sweet ? " She, all expectation of something else, as modestly answered, " It was just as Papa pleased." I need not say they came together.

But the most extraordinary discovery in this chameleon subject which my penetration ever made was, that love may not only exist, but be professed, pursued, felt seriously, or abandoned inconsiderately, and renewed again, and yet the lovers be not even acquainted with one another at the time.

Etheredge first opened my eyes to this, in what he told me of his own secret passion for Lady Isabel ; secret, but not undiscovered, as we shall see anon, when we come to that interesting part of these memoirs. Meantime, take a picture of what I have asserted.

Mirabel saw Millamant at a ball. He admired her for all that can make a woman at a ball admirable. Yet he never saw her before, and did not know even her name. He approached, watched, fastened upon her every look and motion, followed her round the waltz, or through the maze of the quadrille ; wherever she is, his eye

(a very dazzling one) measures her from head to foot, but always with respect. It is impossible not to see that Millamant has made a conquest, and no despicable one. On his side he perceives that his homage is observed, received, and, he hopes, not disapproved. There is more airiness in her foot, and more grace in her manner, when under his gaze, than with any other observer. Their eyes meet; there is a little consciousness, and a little constraint on her part. She ventures to think him bold; and to avert his gaze, perhaps to punish him, turns from him, and now avoids the part of the room where he takes his stand. He is angry; looks at her no more; looks at another, with whom he attempts to flirt. But Millamant has the advantage; for as she passes, she sees him again eyeing her, as if to ascertain whether she observed him or not. This was dangerous on his part; for it convinced her he was not indifferent; and she used him cruelly on that account. Though neither of them yet knows the other, there is thus quite a lover's quarrel already established between them, which ends as lovers' quarrels generally do, in greater attention on both sides. All this I saw, and drew judicious inferences for my own guidance.

In trying to make Millamant jealous, Mirabel's

was, as I said, a hazardous experiment ; for as he could not keep it up, but by looking at her, when he meant to be absorbed by another, she found out his play, and, knowing the game as well as he, beat him.

All this was dumb show, but who will not say there was love in it, aye, in all its mazes ? The sequel proved it. They were introduced, grew intimate, naturally explained this very rencontre, and in a month were married.

In a month ! you will say—too soon ! Not so, if you can believe an honest Irishman I once knew. Dermot for the first time met Judy at a fair ; treated her ; danced with her ; and the next day, having got her consent, went to the priest. Father Murphy did not approve of love at first sight,—Dermot differed.

“ Plase your Reverence,” said he, “ I am bound to you for your advice, but I hope you will excuse me for differing, and thinking my scheme better than yours.”

“ Why ?” said the father.

“ For this raison,” replied Dermot ; “ love at first sight sparkles and burns like whiskey ; but an ould engagement is like dead small bare.”

We have said, that as love may come, so it may go, we scarce know why in either case ; but when it does go, care should be taken to make all

decent in the separation; so that though there may be no love remaining, there shall be a great deal of esteem. The situation is not quite so pleasant, but it is better than the éclat of a rupture. However, I cannot fail to recollect here the pathetic lamentation of a lively French marquis, who had loved his mistress to distraction, but somehow or another cooled off. Calling upon him one day, I asked him how his suit to Madame de F. went on.

“ Oh ! mon amie,” he replied, “ nous sommes dans toutes les horreurs de l’amitié !”

“ I suppose,” said I, “ this friendship will soon turn to hate, as love itself very often does.”

“ Vous vous trompez,” said he ; “ I did not love her enough to hate her.”

This reply is so full of meaning, and lets in so much light upon this intricate subject, that I recommend it to the notice and study of all my brother-philosophers. Yet even here the friendship of the marquis lasted no longer than was necessary for the decencies to be fulfilled ;—verifying in this the “ wise saws and instances” of maxim-mongers.

“ There must be a nice diet,” says Halifax, “ to keep friendship from falling sick.” And again ;

“ Esteem ought to be the ground of kindness,

and yet there are no friends that seldomer meet. Kindness is apt to be afraid of esteem."

"Ce qui fait que la plupart des femmes sont peu touchées de l'amitié, c'est qu'elle est fade quand ou a senti de l'amour*."

With all these French maxims, if you will believe a Frenchman, "Il n'y a qu'un Printems dans l'année." In England the variations of climate through the year are proverbial, and there are many Springs; hence, I suppose, the inconstancy of which I am treating.

But what a sad digression have I made from Lady Laura. Yet love, with all its concomitants, is such a field of flowers, that it is impossible to pursue a straight line through it. We must stop a little, and gather a little, and go out of the way a little; and not be the worse for it, I hope, though retarded a little.

Well, then, I have to confess that, in spite of Etheredge's cautions, I became in love, downright love, with Lady Laura, which, as soon as she perceived, she changed her whole conduct, from warm to lukewarm, and from lukewarm to cold. My attentions were all thrown away. I know not why, but I became painfully certain that she would not dance her hair out of

* De la Rochefocault.

curl for me, any more than for a married man. I was rightly served, after all the warnings I had received; but the worst was, I had not spirit enough to break my chain, but resolved to fly. Etheredge, now returned from the Continent, came luckily to my support. He opposed my resolution with great force; and, it must be owned, for a reason rather original.

“ I must quit her,” said I, “ quit her for ever.”

“ You had better pursue her still more closely,” said he.

“ You are jesting.”

“ No!—Tie yourself to her side; watch her looks still more keenly; observe, study, dive into her mind, such as it is; tempt her to disclose all she thinks, feels, and knows.”

“ What good will that do?” (I asked this somewhat peevishly).

“ It will restore you to yourself.”

“ Impossible!”

“ Infallible! At present you do not love her, but something else.”

“ What?”

“ A mask, which strip off, and you will recover. Fly, and you are lost—you will never think otherwise of her; remain, and you will find her out.”

“ Surely absence—” cried I; but he cut me short.

“Abstractedly,” said he, “yes!—individually, no! You give Lady Laura, while she keeps you at a distance, credit for a thousand virtues. Approach, besiege, cultivate, never leave her; and you will find your mistake. Perhaps, indeed, you do not wish to find it, but are like Horace’s madman—

‘Pòl. me occidistis amici,
Non servastis:’

and reproached them for having robbed him of happiness by curing him of delusion.”

I was very angry, but more so when he went on.

“You say you have sometimes thought you were encouraged. I have no doubt you were, and will be again, if she has nothing else upon her hands. I dare say she would listen to your tale, your sentiment, and your wit; ay! for ten minutes together; but let another man, *bien répandu*, with a good person, fresh cheeks, and black whiskers, approach, and how soon would all you have said be forgotten!”

I never knew Etheredge so disagreeable; but nevertheless I took his advice. I had every opportunity from her father and mother, and again from herself; but a few weeks’ closer intimacy convinced me that Etheridge was right. Lady Laura was an accomplished piece of mechanism; she had polish—even to dazzling; but was frivolous,

selfish, empty, and unfeeling ; without conversation, without candour, and without mind. She married, however, at last, the younger son of a rich nobleman, who had paid forty thousand pounds of debt for him. Her husband had long been distinguished for gallantry and expense, and they lived upon the reputation of it, now he was upon the wane in both. He was one of those handsome egotists, *qui se laissent aimer* ; and Lady Laura being pretty much of the same character, took him for fear of sinking into the wane too. In truth, notwithstanding his five-and-thirty years, he was irresistible. He had a bold yet languishing look, an affected bend in the neck, and a sleepiness of eye in which a leer seemed always to lurk. In short, Lady Laura pronounced him perfect. To be sure he was rather *blasé* ; but he had the reputation of a host of *bonnes-fortunes*, which only made his devotion the more flattering. To be sure, also, his family would pay no more debts for him, and Lord Wilmington therefore refused his consent ; but that, by cutting off the hope of more than a mere modicum of a portion, only made the whole thing more generous on his side ; and besides, when the deed was done, they thought Lord Wilmington might relent. Lord Wilming-

ton did not relent; and they were married, they could hardly tell how. To support his expenses he returned to gaming; which failing, he condescended to receive five guineas a-night for dealing for others. Lady Laura, shorn of her own beams, was glad to accept the reflected radiance of more fortunate persons, and frequented opera, ball, or park, with any one who pitied her as the victim of an *unfortunate* and *disinterested* attachment.

Having thus wound up with this exquisite Lady, let me return to myself. I was still young, and still an admirer of the sex. I fluttered about from flower to flower, but settled upon none. Some were sweet to look at, but had no other sweetness; some had beautiful minds, but had no other beauty; some were gentle, but weak withal; some forward, but close and designing. I became capricious, and often, I fear, unjust; at the same time it was not in my own person alone that I discovered how sudden might be revolutions in love as well as in kingdoms. Indeed, what is love but a very great kingdom? What embarrassed me, however, was, that the same person should, within an interval almost imperceptible, charm and disgust, attract and repel, without knowing why; so that a woman who

parted over-night queen of devoted slaves, might rise next morning without even a subject. To be sure, I had consulted one of my oracles, Pope, about it; but he only told me the fact which I knew without him—

“ How many pictures of one nymph we view,
All how unlike each other—all how true:
Choose a firm cloud before it fall, and in it
Catch, ere she change, this Cynthia of the minute.”

The *philosophy* of love (do not let anybody start at the word,) has been sometimes attempted, and it seems agreed that it oftener comes by chance than choice; and if so it comes, so it may go. It is certain, that as a look, a tone of voice, or a pleasing peculiarity of manner, may in a moment make a man fancy himself enslaved; so a changed expression, a frown instead of a smile, too much or too little pressure of the hand at meeting or parting, a piece of awkwardness overlooked, or a word misplaced or mispronounced, often, to his surprise, sets him free.

One of my friends was so struck with the beauty of a fair musician, that though she sang to him the whole evening, he did not detect her provincial dialect. He flew to pay his court the next day, but came away mortified and cured, because she asked him if he had been on “ orse-back.”

I myself was once a penitent sinner in regard to a very pretty Miss F. I admired her shape—

“Fine by degrees and beautifully less.”

I admired her head, and particularly her Vandyke coiffure; I admired her frankness; I admired her dancing, and the precision with which her step accorded with the music; and I only could not admire her feet, because she had very long petticoats, and I did not see them. This went on several evenings, when the whole enchantment broke in a morning call; for—O! the change!—she appeared an absolute slattern. She was sitting, but did not sit well. Her foot appeared, and though the silk that clothed it was glossy and spotless, the foot itself was large and turned in, and the whole grace of posture destroyed by a slouch. She was preparing for a walk, and had a bonnet anything but aristocratic; and then an odious dark shawl, with its odious triangular shape, was so at enmity with all proportion, as to destroy every notion of grace or symmetry,—the distinguishing charm of woman’s attraction. I found that morning and evening made a most essential difference: in the evening Miss F. was a sultana; in the morning a *femme de chambre*, and a very slovenly one.

This facility of change was, I afterwards found,

by no means an uncommon case; nor is it surprising, if the admiration is not founded in more than beauty.

Etheredge told me of another instance of sudden change, owing to the misfortune of a pretty fool, who, about the time of the French Revolution, lost her whole empire in one night by a mistake as to a name. The revolutionary tribunal had cut off the head of one of their brother revolutionists, the blockhead Anacharsis Cloots. Poor Clara, who set up for a reader as well as a beauty, was at the time studying the Anacharsis of Barthelemy, of which she often talked; and she could not restrain her aristocratic indignation at this fresh instance of republican barbarity.

“What think you,” said she to Mr. O., one of her admirers, “of their having executed the learned Scythian traveller into Greece?”

How he got to Paris, it was not her business to explain, nor did Mr. O. ask. Neither did she discover why, notwithstanding her beauty, he seemed to be less anxious for her notice or conversation than he had heretofore been.

I now paid much court to a certain Lady Elizabeth, by whom I was dismissed from a most provoking oversight, which, however, I am bound to relate. Lady Elizabeth was almost as handsome, and not nearly such an actress, as Lady

Laura. She was, indeed, greatly her superior in sense. Yet I found that I knew not then the real value of the praise given by Pope to that woman who could bear

“Sighs for another with unwounded ear.”

I had for some time, through Etheredge, been, I might say, intimate with Lady Isabel. It was astonishing how all her contemporaries, Lady Elizabeth among them, *endeavoured* (they could do no more than endeavour) to depreciate her. Had I been less matter of fact, I ought to have taken my cue from this ; but I must play the honest man out of season, and was punished for it.

Lady Elizabeth, after rallying me on my intimacy with Lady Isabel, insisted upon knowing what I really thought of her ; and I answered, like a downright ignorant as I was, that she was, without *any exception whatever*, the most perfect *beau idéal* of beauty, grace, and goodness, that could be conceived. I observed a tinge mount immediately into Lady Elizabeth's cheek, but did not dream of the real cause. From that time Lady Elizabeth scarcely ever spoke to me.

My dupery was long in curing ; and though I continued to study the world, I did not bring the results of my study to profit, either for myself or others. One of my fellow-flutterers,—for we flutter about the sex in be vies, like moths about

a candle,—was *inclined* to be in love (we none of us went much farther than *inclined*,) with a very handsome Indamora, who had quite sufficient notions of her own attractions. Thinking to do him service with her, I literally one day repeated what he had said to me of her good qualities.

“ She has sufficient beauty,” said he, “ but this alone *would not weigh enough with me* ; my danger is from her mental merits.”

“ *Sufficient* beauty !” cried his mistress.

She said no more, but she looked coldly upon my friend ever after ; nor had I courage to reveal to him what I had done in my zeal and my adroitness to serve him.

It was about this time of my life that I had an opportunity of discovering, of what immensely more consequence than many (even wise people) suppose, are what they would call trifles, upon so solemn a subject as I have embarked in. Whether the question be merely of love, but much more if of love leading to marriage, will it be believed upon what slight, what trivial, circumstances so grave a question may depend ! I once knew a match broke off ;—the gentleman, a most unexceptionable person, high-born, young, rich, and amiable ;—because a friend of the lady had quizzed her for choosing a man who wore beaver gloves. Men’s fates are different ; for another

was not only accepted, but not jilted, for no other merit, at least that was ever avowed, than that he tied his neckclock and wore his hat so well.

Marriage—happy or unhappy—alas! upon what does it depend? How may it not be trifled with! But all women are not like to Lady Isabel, neither are they to Belinda. Of Isabel, more hereafter. Of Belinda, let all fine ladies, young and handsome as they may be, learn to beware of overrating their power, or using it despotically. Despotism has destroyed many a hero; in this instance it did more: it destroyed a fine lady of the first class. Belinda was courted by a young man of fashion, against whom, except as a widower, nothing could be said. She was young, and the best dancer in England. He was young as herself, and danced almost as well. She was his superior in rank, but had not a sous. He without a title, but as rich as Croesus. With so many qualifications on both sides for happiness in the married life, who could doubt the result! But Belinda was despotic, and, after acceptance, insisted upon her lover's sending two beautiful children he had to his relations, in order, as she said, that their connubial leisure might not be interrupted. The condition was rejected, the love of the gentleman turned into indignation, and the lady, now an old maid, re-

flects, in tears and seclusion, how dangerous it may be to defeat a fair prospect by unreasonable conditions. The world, as it always does, sat in judgment upon this occurrence, and pronounced both the gentleman and the lady to blame—both rightly served. It is certain that neither of them properly loved. Belinda's mind was in her feet, in the eyes of the gentleman; and the gentleman's worthiness in his purse, in the imagination of the lady.

Though I had got on pretty well in the characters of men, I was thus still a novice as to women. I was therefore wholly at a loss to understand the conclusion of one of my companions, who I knew was almost desperate about a lady he much admired. For some time he had complained of her indecision, but had now, he said, considerable hope; for her father, after having at first encouraged him, had now positively refused his consent, and she had smiled upon him ever since. Strange this, but true; and stranger still, what I afterwards learned on their being married,—that the whole was a contrivance beforehand, between the lover and the father. Is this, or not, an illustration of La Rochefoucault, "*Dans l'amour on est souvent plus heureux par les choses qu'on ignore, que par celles que l'on sait ?*"

In the course of my lucubrations upon this all-

teeming subject, I got acquainted with another character, who, like the Lord Boyet of Shakespeare*, might be called “an old love-monger.” He had never married, but had what is called the *besoin d’aimer* to so remarkable a degree, that he dangled after the sex from sixteen to sixty-five. Many, now grandmothers, had been the object of his warmest attentions; some of them so little gifted, and some so downright ugly, that it was said of him, that if a monkey were to be dressed in woman’s clothes he would make love to it. This made all the young women titter when he approached; yet no one seemed disposed entirely to give him up till she married: looking upon him as a *pis aller*, to be had for asking, in case of necessity. Yet they could not be too sure; for he was as inconstant as he was violent, and his fire often burnt out before it could be said to be lighted. In his gallantry he made presents, sometimes of books, and would have his Helen’s christian name on the outside in letters of gold. On one of these occasions he changed his love before his present could be delivered. *N’importe*, it would do for the next;—though he was a little abashed on reading the following item in his bookbinder’s bill—“For taking out Clarinda, and putting in Melissa, 10s. 6d.” With

* Love’s Labour Lost.

all this he was a man *à parfait amour* for the time, and made warm and pretty verses, but never made an offer. His reason for this was curious, especially when he had reached his grand climacteric,—that no one had yet come up to his idea of perfection. The truth is, though always with the *besoin d'aimer* upon him, he never had the *besoin de se marier*. I shuddered to think what I might come to, if I imitated this Lord Boyet, which I seemed in a fair way of doing. Yet on the borders of seventy he is still able to waltz, and, without blushing, *faire les yeux doux*.

But lest the lighter characters, both male and female, which I have described, should, from the very levity of the parties, be held to prove nothing as to the requisites for marriage, pass we to graver personages, or at least of greater promise:—though I must premise that, having done with *couleur de rose*, I am now going to talk of blue.

Doctor Testwood was an universal scholar among the men; Mrs. Aspasia Pinchbeck (for she had taken the brevet) the same among the women. The Doctor made all science and the languages bend before him. He was great in logic, great in Greek, and the terror of the candidates for honours at Cambridge. Mrs. Aspasia was not far behind him, in many persons' opinion, and quite his equal in her own. This balanced many

defects of the lady, in the eyes of us little people ; for she was quite as ugly as learned,—which is saying a great deal. The Doctor, however, far above personal, looked only to mental charms, and was struck one morning when he found her, as Roger Ascham found Lady Jane Grey, in her chamber reading “ the *Phædon* *Platonis* in Greeke, and that with as much delite, as some gentlemen would read a merrie tale in *Bocace**.” The Doctor honoured her learning, and not at all the less, because on one knotty passage she did him the honour to ask his assistance. He declared she had few superiors in the whole university, and from that time began to have serious thoughts of courtship. It would be so delightful to have such a companion for his loneliness, through whom books, though closed, might still continue to be read : and it would be so particularly pleasing to aid and direct so inquiring a mind ! He offered, and was accepted, and the honeymoon was past in the library. Alas ! it would have been better had it been at Brighton ; for to aid and direct was quite out of the question. Disputes soon began to arise, very unforeseen on the Doctor’s part, and which being scholastic, had little prospect of termination. They originated in a difference of opinion about the

* Ascham’s Schoolmaster.

real meaning of Metaphysics, founded upon the words form, figure, and shape; they were continued with bitterness in discussing some of the ten predicaments; inflamed to fever by an inquiry into a Greek root; and pushed *à l'outrance* in a struggle about the Tertium Quid. A separation finally ensued, upon which some of the Doctor's friends condoled with, more congratulated him. They thus exemplified a fearful passage in the poet's satire—

“ Nought but a genius can a genius fit:—

A wit herself, Amelia weds a wit;

Both wits! Though miracles are said to cease,

Three days! three wond'rous days they lived in peace.

With the fourth sun a warm dispute arose,

On Durfey's poesy and Bunyan's prose:

The learned war both wage with equal force,

And the fifth morn concluded with divorce*.”

This was my first case in this class of unfortunate marriages. Another soon arose, not quite so serious, but equally unhappy. Miranda had a great deal of genius, and little money; Cleophas much money, but no genius. It was thought that she would enlighten him, and he enrich her. They tried, but failed. She lamented that she had married a fool; he that he had wedded a shrew. They did not separate, but gave dinners,

* Young's Love of Fame.

at which she could not conceal her contempt for him, nor he his hatred of her.

Warned perhaps by these examples, a friend of mine, much imbued with philosophy, contemplative, very thoughtful, and very grave, resolved to have a companion who would cheer his hours of relaxation with affection, but never presume to thwart, much less defy him. He married the young Horiensia, as fair as young, and cheerful as fair. What was almost better for his purpose, she had almost everything to learn, and he was prepared to teach. Behold, then, the fond, grave husband turned into a schoolmaster, and the gay little wife into a not always attentive scholar. Companionship was soon at an end, where there were such constant dictation and superiority on one side, and nothing but dry submission on the other.

My friend, like old Shandy, was mortified that he could never get his wife to contradict him, that he might overpower her with his learning. He wrote theories which she could not understand, and felt literary beauties which she could not participate. She one day, indeed, asked him what mathematics were; and the prospect began to brighten. But when he commenced a preliminary lecture of great promise, the prospect of instruction was so utterly hopeless that he gave

it up, and they relapsed into apathy. He then found out, but too late, that the practical Paley was right, when he said that a wife without power or disposition to differ with her husband, "moost be soomthing vary flat."

Paley might have changed his opinion if his meek helpmate had been like the Countess of Z., whose government of her husband, however, only proceeded from fondness: so at least it was said. Whether the Earl thought so, it is not for me to decide; it is certain it sometimes cost him dear; and when he professed, as among disputing divines he sometimes did, his disbelief of *Free Will*, all thought him sincere. My business, however, is with his married life, and the various lessons it afforded me as a candidate for marriage myself. My first was occasioned by a message sent him at a dinner, by her own footman, who delivered it aloud: "My lord, my lady desires you will not drink so much champagne, as it disagrees with you." My next arose from another message in another place, requesting his Lordship would not lean his head against a wall, as it was cold, and he had so little hair. My third occurred on a race-ground, where the Earl, who sometimes liked to be without his hat, had purposely taken it off. A footman was immediately dispatched, not only desiring my lord to put his hat on, but

with orders to put it on for him if he refused. Whether all these things told with him, as indicative of the best of wives, as all her family called her, I know not; but when she died, his escape from thralldom manifested itself in a manner not to be mistaken. It seems there was a bed-chamber with yellow hangings, which he particularly wished to inhabit, and which she particularly resolved not to allow him. This went on for two years; and the first, indeed only words he uttered when her death was announced, were, "I will sleep in the yellow room to-night."

Can it be wondered at if these ill-assorted marriages frightened me, and kept my inclination to wear the chains of the sex under better regulation than it had been. I had no more Lady Lauras, nor evening stars that went out on the return of the morning; and I began to think of celibacy as a very bearable thing. I was in a fair way, too, of being bit by ambition; and I was struck with a knotty question, whether ambition naturally *succeeds* love, or whether it is so absorbing in itself as to prevent any brother or sister near the throne.

No doubt the men whose souls ran over most with ambition, were equally distinguished as lovers of the sex;—as Cæsar, Pompey, and all the Romans, Henry IV. and Lewis XIV., with un-

numbered moderns, both kings and ministers, abundantly testify. But theirs was not the pure as well as absorbing passion which is here in question. To be sure, no man was more ambitious or more a lover than Anthony, who for a woman, a Cleopatra, lost the world, and was content to lose it. Of him it was truly said, that he “kissed away provinces;” and old Ventidius was but right in asking him why his legions should fight,

“ To make her conquer,
And make him more a slave ; To gain him kingdoms,
Which for a kiss at your next midnight feast
You’ll sell to her * ? ”

to which he answers—

“ On your life,
No word of Cleopatra—She deserves
More worlds than I can lose.”

Neither Cæsar nor Alexander would have done this ; and here, therefore, is certainly an instance of the two great passions raging with equal violence at the same time in the same breast.

But the conduct of an emperor who won the world by his sword, and lost it for a kiss, it is not for us puny experimenters to scan, far less to imitate. Our question is, in more sober common-

* See Dryden’s noble scene between Anthony and Ventidius—
All for Love.

place, whether great and real love is compatible, in the same degree, and at the same time, with great and real ambition.

I confess it is beyond me to say; though the examples of Cromwell, Richelieu, King William, Harley, Bolingbroke, Walpole, Chesterfield, Chatham, and Pitt, none of whom were, at least, martyrs to *la belle passion*, like Anthony, would incline me to the negative of the proposition.

Start not that I have mentioned St. John as a stranger to love, though no stranger to women. Headlong in everything, the sex, in the midst of his most brilliant career, engrossed him. Yet he knew not love, such love as Etheredge's; for he was gross, licentious to profligacy. One of his mistresses was Clara, an orange wench as abandoned as himself. To her he wrote verses. We will say nothing of the report of the manner, time, and place, in which he signed the peace of Utrecht. Chesterfield, who knew him well, says he disdained all decorum; his fine imagination was often heated and exhausted with his body, in celebrating and deifying the prostitute of the night. No! Such a man could not love, and the question as to the proportion between love and ambition remains as uncertain as ever.

Take an example of sincere and real passion, and let it be a touchstone of truth to those (male

or female) who *fancy* themselves lovers. Yet it is only of a young girl, a farmer's daughter, who had given her affection to one higher than herself. It was thus she wrote to her confidant :—

“ Yes! I rose with the light to get him the newest eggs for his breakfast ; and I would not let the gardener, but would myself dig the young potatoes for his dinner. He knew it not, nor would I ever tell him how I laboured : but such was my adoration, that the labour was sweet. I wish I could always do it.”

Alas! that such fervour and such sincerity should not even have been known to the party most concerned, who is still seeking for a child of Nature whom his heart will never find ; while she who could thus write, and thus feel, with a furrowed cheek and faded eyes, drags on an unsocial existence, instead of that rapturous interchange for which she was so formed.

From all I have said, therefore, was not the universal poet right when he called Love “ that bastard of Venus, that was begot by thought, conceived of spleen, and born of madness? that blind, rascally boy that abuses every one's eyes, because his own are out*.” This, you will say, is mere railing, and belongs only to capricious love. Take, therefore, one of a higher order, full

* As You Like It.

of honour, full of tenderness, and full of respect. To such I am approaching; and yet, even here, the same poet, only in politer terms, will characterize something very startling, though very delightful, when he tells you—

“ It is to be all made of faith and service,
It is to be all made of fantasy ;
All made of passion, all made of wishes,
All adoration, duty, and observance ;
All humbleness, all patience, and impatience,
All purity, all trial *.”

If you think this an exaggeration, take the proof of it in the story of Etheredge and Lady Isabel, to which I promised to recur, and with which I shall conclude this learned and elaborate treatise.

We left them, I think, at the Carlton House fête, where, by the introduction of Etheredge by the Marquis her brother, two persons who had known one another for some time without speaking, were at last brought together. On the introduction there was a mystery about them both, which perhaps not themselves, certainly not any body else, understood.

In short, as was related, they had met on the banks of the Rhine, a country famous for many a legend of old, to which we will now add one far

* As You Like It.

more modern, but I trust as interesting, and a little more true. There were, indeed, no Rowlandseck nor Drachenfells, but there was the elegant and pastoral Wiesbaden, pastoral though a metropolis, with all its concomitants of verdant groves and bubbling rivulets, without-doors, and baths, balls, concerts, and good company, within. Here the acquaintance, if acquaintance it can be called, began. I say nothing of the beauties of the place, but its walks are, and will for ever be, consecrated in the memory of both Etheredge and the Lady Isabel. It was here they first met; here that *he* loved, and *she* observed his love. She did no more. But whether it was the joy that seemed to animate him whenever he saw her; or the devotion of his look, silent but obvious when she approached; or the gloom which seemed to cast him down when she was leaving the walk; or whether really the intelligence and manly ease which were so pictured in the countenance and bearing of my cousin, as to give him the air of what he was, a man of quality, and therefore pleasing to a woman of the same degree; certain it is that the Lady Isabel could not pass him by, undistinguished, amid the common herd of visitors that crowded those walks.

Etheredge had been a fortnight at the place without having seen one individual female who

could make him look twice at her, or, in absence, think once that such an individual existed. All was dull, flat, and uninteresting, or interesting only as affording food for that critical vein in him which I have described. Some, indeed, were worthy being studied, but were overlooked amid much commonplace, much finery, much vulgarity, loudness, awkwardness, sheepishness, forwardness, all which offended his taste, though they might employ his eye. There was a host of barons, counts, countesses, and even, for a time, princesses ; but all seemed waste and desert to our moody Englishman, who, if he had not foresworn love before, from never having met his *beau idéal* of female excellence, would certainly have foresworn it here. He actually did so, and was only confirmed in his despair of ever meeting a woman who could engage his affections. And yet had he not been thus moody, thus critical, thus fastidious,—perhaps I ought to add, so ill in health,—he might have found reason to emerge from that dark cloud which oppressed him. He saw no beauty in many that were beautiful ; no fashion in some who were fashionable ; he almost denied youth to the young, and cheerfulness to the gay. His gloom became painful.

In this state of things, and having for the

fiftieth time surveyed the same ordinary figures, the same homely features, and the same no-meaning manners, in a thousand passengers in the walks, what was his surprise, what his joy, to have his eye greeted by a personage, or rather a vision (for so he thought it,) at once elegant, graceful, noble, and natural! It was so completely so, as to appear what his eye had never seen—his fancy never imagined. Though he knew not even her country, much less her name or birth, his love of grace, and, I might add, his love of goodness, were all touched in a moment. It was not that Lady Isabel was tall or majestic in figure, commanding in manner, or striking in feature; but she was a picture of that tranquil grace, arising from all three, which won everybody's good-will, as well as everybody's admiration, at first sight. Her countenance was exquisitely expressive of all that was felt within; and though modesty was the prevailing quality that first engaged observation, it was accompanied with such self-possession, as to bespeak the highest good breeding, blended with the sweetest good nature, and the best good sense.

Few but those well born, and none but those well bred, could in such an instant evince, though unconsciously, the superiority which in these respects she showed over all her companions. Her

soul spoke in her eyes ; and though very plainly dressed, her native elegance so shone through the veil, that every look and motion were stamped with the character of Lady.

Etheredge saw this at once, and being a Miltonian, could not help mentally exclaiming—

“ Though in this disguise,
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes,
Of famous Arcady you are.”

Yet all this time she was, as has been said, totally unconscious of the sensation she occasioned, which was by no means confined to Etheredge, who envied every person who spoke to her for being honoured by her notice.

To these, such seemed her frankness, that he felt as if he could have given half his estate to have been enrolled among them. Yet a mere application to one of many common friends on the spot would have effected it in a moment. But this, in his rapture, he either forgot, or the suddenness of it had so bewildered him, that he seemed to have lost his power of acting.

The absorption, I may say confusion, of his intellect, continued, he says, for several days ;—so deeply was he struck. At the same time so fully was he possessed of that feeling of hopelessness, from the disparity of situation which I have men-

tioned elsewhere, that he conceived the strange resolution to abstain altogether from her acquaintance. But this almost increased his ardour, or at least his desire to behold her ; and morning, noon, and evening the avenues and mazy walks, which encircle the baths, were threaded by him, in anxious hope to behold her again and again. He was at least not disappointed ; for she was so fond of that variegated, yet tranquil sylvan scene, and her health so benefited by the exercise, that she gave to them every hour she could spare from home occupations.

Wherever she was, she was sure to meet this most respectful of admirers, and warmest of lovers (for such he became), though silent and retiring whenever she appeared.

Not to notice him was impossible ; but to dive into his feelings equally so. Nevertheless, whether there is some secret prescience in the heart of a woman, that tells her when she has inspired good-will, though not a word be spoken on either side ; or whether fate contrives it for us ; Etheredge was certainly regarded by Lady Isabel as a person not to be passed over in a crowd. His studious avoidance of her eye when they met, spoke, perhaps, more to her than if his own had flashed upon her ; which would have made her instantly retire within herself. As it

was, a kind of unconscious interest was created in this object of universal approbation, for the only person who did not seem anxious to approve her. Of course it was known who he was ; and his reputation as a critical, and, perhaps, severe observer of character, had not been unheard of by Lady Isabel ; though her youth, and a very secluded education, had prevented her hitherto from meeting him.

His family and rank, though inferior to her's, made him only a proper acquaintance, and his honourable character a desirable one ; and this being heightened by the circumstance of their both being English, and meeting abroad, made the perseverance of his distance not only more remarkable, but almost mysterious. All this only added to the interest, whatever it was, which this beautiful and unsophisticated being took in her silent admirer ; and somehow or other, the numbers, particularly of her countrymen, who pressed forwards, candidates for the honour of her acquaintance, or eager to engage her in conversation, seemed to have less importance with her, than this apparently abstracted and distant individual.

Thus, without knowing or intending it, the conduct which Etheredge's despair or humility had imposed upon him, did him more good, where

he most wished it, than if he had even taken a lead in offering those attentions which all were so eager to show.

The stay at Wiesbaden, if not the happiest, was the most interesting epoch of my cousin's life. All notion of *ennui* had ceased the moment this charming vision took possession of him. He was entirely absorbed by it; for whether alone, or in a crowd, in the woods, where she was a nymph, or the rooms, where she was a queen, all was this elegant being; and what the sensual Angelo said of himself, might have been with less blame applied to Etheredge:—

“ When I would think and pray, Heaven hath my empty words.
Whilst my intention, hearing not my tongue,
Anchors on Isabel *.”

Though he had never spoken, and knew not that he was even known to her, the departure of Isabel from Wiesbaden was a day of mourning to her admirer. The baths, however, the place, the magnificent Kursaal, and particularly the lovely walks, though lonely now, were no longer the dull insipidities they had been. Every alley, or bench, or alcove, the garden, orchestra, the lake with its swans, the brooks with their fringed banks, the esplanade, the colonnade, all

* Measure for Measure.

teemed with reminiscences of the fairy whose wand had converted monotony and gloom into enchantment and joy ; and that enchantment, though now tinged with melancholy, still gilded the place, as if with a sunshine.

A cousin of Lady Isabel's, Mr. Maundrell, was Etheredge's intimate friend, and to him he could not help confiding the impression she had made, and at the same time his resolution to bury his feelings in his own bosom. Guarding himself, as he thought, by this, he indulged in his recollections, and wrote of her as follows. I cannot help giving it, as an ebullition of an ardent mind under an honourable and virtuous bias. It filled me with interest, when I read it ; and luckily for him, it had the same effect on the person from whom he most wished to conceal it. 'Tis thus he writes :—

“ Sleepless nights and dreaming days do me little good. Yet, sleeping or waking, I have but one vision, one thought, one recollection :—that lovely form, that personification of all elegance. Reading, playing, riding, walking, she is always before me. If I float on the water, or wander in the woods, all, all is Isabel ; she my only companion. But this is ideal ; the reality is wanting ; and deprives this beautiful place of its principal beauty. The groves and avenues which I pace

by the hour might seem to another to be peopled with imaginary Dryads. They are as fresh and as shady as ever ; but the real Dryad is not there to enjoy and adorn them. I hear the nightingale, but not her ; and the nightingale is not half so sweet. In short, the animating spirit that increased the fragrance of the flowers, and gave new blossoms to the trees, the real Dryad is not here, but has fled to her distant bower."

Will anybody believe that this could be the trenchant Etheredge ; the redoubtable critic of human nature ; the detector of all double motives ; the stern requirer of graces and virtues to melt him, such as the world seldom sees, and himself despaired of finding ? Such, however, is the force of mighty love.

I am happy, and those who read this memoir will, I hope, be happy too, at the conclusion of this episode. It grew, as has been seen, out of the meeting at Carlton House, where, it will be recollected, an introduction took place, almost against Etheredge's will. He could refuse neither that, nor the frequent invitations afterwards of the Marquis, who grew fonder and fonder of his society. The summer approached ; the family were returning to the Rhine, with the addition of Isabel's brother.

What shall we say to Etheredge's feelings,

when upon the Marquis entreating him to accompany them, he saw Isabel's countenance light up with an expression of frank pleasure, indescribable as irresistible? The party was made in a moment; in a fortnight they were again at Wiesbaden; and in two months the Dryad, lovelier, because kinder than ever, no longer met a silent, despairing, melancholy devotee, but pressed the arm of a betrothed lover.

How all this was brought about, it does not fall within the scope of this memoir to narrate. For Etheredge nothing need be explained; for Isabel, very little. It is sufficient that the interest so strangely kindled the preceding year, remained undiminished till they met again.

The intimacy, encouraged by the Marquis, did wonders for Etheredge. His sense, his knowledge of life, as a foundation, and a thousand *agrémens* for ornament, raised so estimable a character for him with the sensible, generous, and natural Isabel, that a very little was necessary to create a warmer feeling. But when she came to be acquainted with all that had passed in his heart on their first acquaintance, his unchanged, though still concealed devotion, and the reasons for that concealment, her own heart responded all he could wish.

Ought I or not to reveal, that he owed, perhaps,

not a little to a sort of treachery, strictly speaking, yet, perhaps, not without defence.

The Marquis had observed the growing intimacy between Etheredge and his sister. Etheredge, though not high titled, was well born, and sufficiently, though not extravagantly rich. Every way it was necessary to ascertain his feelings for Isabel. The Marquis could not apply to him himself, but he did to Maundrell, as his own cousin and Etheredge's known confidant. Maundrell, thinking to do good, readily revealed the whole affair, and even put the letter that has been quoted into the Marquis's hands. Etheredge had forgotten his humility, and made his offer; and the Marquis laid that letter before his sister, from whom it drew tears of joy.

All this passed at Wiesbaden. Can we wonder that Wiesbaden is thought consecrated ground? Whether Etheredge deserved, or did justice to his wife, may be seen in the following letter, written to me six months after his marriage; so glowing, and so beyond anything I have related of Isabel, that I think I cannot do better than insert it, as the best conclusion of this part of my memoirs:

“ She has the most extraordinary contrast of expression that ever gave character to woman. Her serious face amounts to melancholy, and even

mournfulness ; but will change in a moment to a gaiety like the morning. Her animated look (and it is the general one) outrivals all we ever read, of Oread, or Dryad, Muse, or Nymph, the Graces, or even Venus herself ! It is the animation of goodness, innocence, and happy virtue, combined in one delightful laughing look. None but a virtuous cheerfulness, altogether without guile, could look so ; and when she does, she is like the sweetest *spring*, or rather sweeter summer ; for Spring is not so perfect ; and even

“ Verona’s summer hath not such a flower ! ”

Oh ! divine power of eloquence, whose gift it is to express to the heart all that the heart feels of sweetest and best, aid my language in describing all I love and admire in this exquisite being ! But oh, my God ! that I should have lived to say, this being is my own ! ”

END OF PART II.

TO

GENERAL
THE HONOURABLE EDMUND PHIPPS.

IF, in a search after happiness, we find that individual character and disposition often do more towards its attainment than all the precepts of all the philosophers; (and, were practical proof of this wanting, I could nowhere find it so eminently as in yourself) what wonder if I seek the sanction of your name to the tenet, by begging you to accept the following Memoir.—

“For thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, who suffers nothing.”

From youth upwards, you have defied infirmity that would have bowed any other man down, and, by the elasticity of spirit alone, and the sunshine of your own mind, are still “redolent of joy and youth,” so as to make age itself seem enviable.

To you, though you have little pastoral about you, we may apply the appellation given by Virgil to his favourite shepherd, of "Fortunate senex;" and, what is better, to you, we may ascribe the full enjoyment of what it so grieved Macbeth to have lost—

"That which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends."

In this last, in particular, every body will recognize you. This alone might account for my wish to inscribe this Memoir to you; and if at the same time it enable me to record, in a treatise on general happiness, how much our long friendship has contributed to mine in particular, I have two objects gained at once.

That you may still long continue to show the world the pleasures which may be enjoyed by a good mind, at whatever time of life, is the heartfelt wish of

Your OLD friend,

THE AUTHOR.

Lausanne,

October, 1836.

PART III.

SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS.

SECTION I.

FIELDING UNDERTAKES A TOUR OF INQUIRY WHETHER HAPPINESS OR MISERY ABOUND MOST IN THE WORLD.

“ Have you thought on
A place whereto you’ll go ?”

“ Not any yet.
We profess ourselves to be
The slaves of chance.”——WINTER’S TALE.

LOVE and ambition having both failed me, I was left, at seven and twenty, a sort of independent, unattached person, alone in a crowd, and belonging to no particular class or party, though known to all. As to love, Etheredge’s marriage took from me all thought of being able to imitate him ; for

Lady Isabel never had a compeer in my mind ; and my heart felt that with less than that it never would be satisfied. After all, I said, love is only an episode in a man's life, never its business. At any rate, I thought I had observed enough in the life I had pursued, to come to the conclusion, that though all were busy, few were happy ; and though the busy approached nearest to happiness, it was rather because they were too much occupied to be unhappy, than that they enjoyed content.

With my philosophical turn I was puzzled. For I was sure that nature, and nature's God, meant us to be happy if we pleased.

“ *Natura beatos*

Omnibus ipse dedit, si quis cognoverit uti.”

Yet every thing appeared to me to be a struggle, either to keep one's own place in the world, or to deprive others of theirs.

Etheredge and his delightful companion seemed to me the only people who had no drawbacks from without ; and within, they were an illustration of the happiness of those “ whom gentler stars unite.” Their felicity was perfect.

I often went to see them at their villa at Richmond ; and however out of humour and puzzled by our human lot when I went, they were sure to

send me back recovered, though to relapse again when I returned to town. We often discussed the question, not only as to the nature, but the sum or quantity, of happiness among mankind.

"It were an excellent undertaking," I said, "to become an English Rasselas, and make a voyage of discovery all over the country, to explore its storms and its calms, and note down its pleasant harbours, as well as its shoals and quicksands. Of course, the natives would show themselves, and we should have abundant food for inquiry."

"Your metaphor," observed Etheredge, "opens a most fertile, and, I should think, an amusing prospect; why should you not turn it into reality?"

"I would," said I, "if you would join company, and rail at the world as you used to do."

"You will please to observe, Mr. Fielding," said Lady Isabel, "that he has done railing at the world, ever since he knew me; so that will be no inducement; and as to going at all, and leaving me behind, you will never get my consent; which I suppose he thinks will be necessary."

At this, such affectionate looks passed between husband and wife, that I felt myself a very insignificant person, and would have dropped the sub-

ject, but that Lady Isabel sportively asked me if she might not be of the party ? to which, thinking of Beatrice, I replied,

“ No ! lady, unless I might have another for working days ; your Grace is too costly to wear every day.”

“ Perhaps you think me unworthy to partake such deep philosophy ?”

“ Much the contrary,” I replied ; “ but I would spare you the condescensions you might have to pay for it.”

“ Condescensions ! Pray explain.”

“ Why, if I undertake this expedition (and, in truth, I have long brooded over it), I should not lounge through it in my post-chaise. I might as well lounge over it in a book, upon my sofa. No ! I should wish to be myself ear-witness and eye-witness of everything, from high to low, from the drawing-room to the steward’s-room, from the château to the cottage ; and if I were at an inn, I should certainly be found quite as often in the kitchen as the parlour. In short, as my object would be man, I should go everywhere where man was to be found, even though in a cobbler’s stall.”

“ He is perfectly right,” cried Etheredge ; and then, looking tenderly at his wife, he exclaimed, “ if I were not Alexander, I should wish to be Diogenes.”

“ And if you so wish it, why not go with him ?” said Isabel, though she rather pursed up her pretty mouth, and a little more of rose tinged her pretty cheek as she said it.

“ Because I *am* Alexander,” answered Etheredge, pressing her hand ; which dissipated every feeling of fear, if there was one.

Much more passed, until what was conceived in uncertainty, and hovered over me like a shapeless vision, assumed a more regular form ; and a plan was laid down, that I should, unsupported, except by my own resources, freely expatiate over

“ A wild where weeds and flow’rs promiscuous shoot,
Or garden tempting with forbidden fruit.
The latent tracks, the giddy heights explore,
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar.”

“ To do this,” I said, “ you must expect to hear of me in as many sorts of positions as that which I seek is known to assume. Misery and discontent, we know, dwell under every shape and covering, and Heaven forefend that their opposites may not be found even under rags. For the present, I have been so entirely confined to one set of manners, maxims, and objects, and so thoroughly deadened and obtunded by sameness, that I feel still like a child in leading-strings. There must be variety and vicissitude, to solve the problem I have at heart, whether Happiness

or Misery, or a sort of neuter gender, between both, or rather an epicene composed of both, preponderate. I have enough studied London, and London ambition, and seen enough of politicians and countesses. I will now emerge into a broader, though, perhaps, a lower world, and gratify my inquiry wherever I can, even though in the shape of a milkmaid."

"Depend upon it," said Etheredge, "that the only difference you will find, will be that between a stuff gown and a silk one."

"And I trust," added Lady Isabel, with a smile that lighted up her beauty with peculiar intelligence, "you will like the silk gown best!"

When returned to my lodging, I pondered over this conversation, and being really much in earnest on the subject, I resolved to begin my search immediately. But I first took a step, which was rather a necessary one you will say: I resolved to consider what it was I was going to inquire about.

Happiness is so general a term, and admits of so many meanings and divisions, that a little method, and a few minutiae, as guides in my search, would, I thought, not be thrown away. I took down several volumes of Ethics, and though I had often pored over them before, I repeated the operation, in some cases with profit, in others

without. But I was a little disheartened when I found that Varro (that often-mentioned, never-seen philosopher and antiquary) was said to have reckoned up three hundred different sorts of happiness.

How many hundred miles I should have to travel before I found them all out, was a fearful question. So I shut my books, and began to try to form a few principles of my own. They had long, indeed, been in my mind, but had never ripened till now.

I found, then, that there might be said to be TWO GREAT DIVISIONS of *Happiness*,—THE NATURAL and THE ARTIFICIAL. The first, as is implied by the term, concerns man in his natural, that is, in his *uninstructed* (I had almost said in his *savage*) state: certainly I mean before any very refined civilization has taken possession of him. We ought, therefore, to inquire what are his chief motives to action, what his chief pleasures or ambition, inspiring him almost as if they were instincts, before he is congregated in towns, with all the trammels that belong to sedentary, or what I should then call artificial life.

Whatever belongs to this first division, if it produce happiness, depend upon it it is genuine. From being more simple, it is also the cheaper; for it is in almost everybody's power; which the

happiness arising from luxury and artificial institutions is not. Hence our gratifications (which is only another word for happiness) are always greater, or at least less sophisticated, the nearer they approach to our primeval or natural state. Hence, therefore, the superior enjoyment of woods and fields, of vocal groves or streams ; the breezy hill or verdant dale ; the boundless sky, the liberal air ;—all so much more *naturally* enjoyable than the pent-up confinement of streets and houses, however magnificent. How far more enviable have I often thought the feeling of a mere wanderer, lying him down to rest after labour among such scenes, than the inhabitant of a rich but gloomy palace, without other appliances to make him happy. Let me not, however, be misunderstood. Palaces have their charms ; magnificence is to be admired, and the arts cultivated ; which they cannot be without patronage and luxury ; and all this bespeaks elegance, and what is called taste ; the indulgence of which is happiness to those who possess them.

Which happiness is the best, I pretend not to determine. It must be for circumstances to decide. But at least this is clear, that the soul as well as the senses, spring voluntarily, and at once, to the one ; while the other demands an apprenticeship, as it were, before it can be properly

appreciated. An Indian who delighted in the magnificence of his native forests, would probably see the splendours of Versailles with no emotion but of wonder, even if he felt that.

But if what I have called natural pleasures hold the first rank in the scale, on account of their closer approximation to our original tastes, the more a man clings to them, and the less he is abstracted from them, the greater, and certainly the more independent, his chances of happiness. Everybody feels this when most he pursues what Nature points out to him as intensely necessary to his existence. Thus man has been designated a hunter, from his very nature; and in the same sense a fisher; because his food depends upon his own exertions in those capacities. Hence, too, when these pursuits are, in consequence of civilization, no longer necessary, our appetite for them remains in our natures, and we almost as eagerly follow them as pleasures, as we formerly did as labours.

Our individual childhood imitates in this the childhood of the world. What exceeds, if anything equals, a boy's delight in his dog, his gun, or his fishing-rod? or when he raises and eats his own salad, the work of his own spade? Yet as he could never fail of having his salad, the pleasure he has in consuming it, over and above the satis-

faction of the palate, can only arise from having been himself the author of the feast. Among other characteristics derived from his nature, man has been even called (and not unjustly) a cooking animal. Hence also, perhaps, the pleasure given by voyages and travels into unexplored countries. What interest is kindled by the discovery of new regions, or the first meeting with new people and manners! But if in our wanderings we are overtaken by a shipwreck, or left on a desert island, all our natural energies, pursuits, tastes,—call them what you will,—seem born again. We are forced to act for ourselves, for our very existence and safety; we are *obliged* to seek and prepare food, shelter, and raiment, and provide for defence; which causes an intenseness of interest unknown to cities, or those who live “where bell doth knoll to church.”

All this brings us acquainted with what Nature demands of us, as most conducive, not merely to our well-being, but to our existence; and the nearer we approach to it in civilized life, the greater our independence: and independence is always the cause of pleasure. If any one doubt this, let him read the most delightful voyage that ever was written; that by Anson; and ponder the lessons on human energies given so at-

tractively by him and his stout companions, at Juan Fernandez and Finian. How often has this turned the high-beating heart of youth from the court, the city, the cloister, and Westminster Hall, to more seducing, because more exciting and *natural* habits. Hence the excitements of military warfare. I mean not the battle, but the encampment, the bivouac, the foraging, and even the cooking. Hence, too, what was said of George II., who, though a king, and tolerably sensible of his rights, having been an old soldier, was plagued by his dependence upon others, and often lighted his own fire. These are not mean or unfounded speculations.

If the "proper study of mankind is man," whatever develops his nature must be looked for in the history of his energies, as brought into action by remarkable situation; and that situation seldom occurs in what I have called his artificial life.

With these reflections as a preliminary, I set out upon my interesting inquiry. Those who knew not my design were astonished at my abandoning London at the end of May; and still more when I told them what was true, that I knew not where I was going. Moreover, the sight of saddle-horses instead of my comfortable barouche, the morning I started, gave still greater food for

curiosity. " But what could you expect," said they, " from a man always in extremes, and who was too old when he came into the world to know anything about it afterwards."

Nothing disheartened, I mounted grey Diomed, who seemed by his prancing to be as much tired of London as his master.

SECTION II.

HENRY FIELDING—TREATY HOUSE—BULSTRODE—
WALLER—BURKE—HAMPTON—MILTON.

“ I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but
only vaulting ambition, which o’erleaps itself.”

MACBETH.

I WILL not say that, on quitting Mayfair, I laid the reins of my horse, like Don Quixote, on his neck, leaving him to choose his road ; but it was only the evening before that I finally determined my first visit should be to Oxford. Accordingly I took the Tyburn-gate, and in half an hour found myself near Acton, opposite a house which was always interesting to me. It was here that were written those pages so loved and devoured in childhood, studied in youth, and ruminated over in maturer age, and always welcomed for the amusement they supply, or the knowledge of mankind they display. It was here that the inimitable Parson Adams, Western, and Partridge, to say nothing of Mrs. Western, (who is still

alive, though her brother be dead ;) it was here that the pure, unsophiscated, and lovely Sophia grew under the pen, and filled the canvas of my eccentric, benevolent, but unfortunate ancestor. Manners may change, and some of the *dramatis personæ* may be blotted out of English society ; but as long as the heart and the English language remain the same, so long will those works be read with equal interest, pleasure, and advantage.

But, alas ! this my first stop was not to illuminate the favourable side of my inquiry. The genius, and with it the lot of Henry Fielding, was ever clouded by miserable penury,—sad to say, made worse by imprudences of his own—anything but virtuous ones. There was but one epoch of his life that was irradiated with a real sunbeam ; for I call the coruscations of his wit and spirits, though they enabled him to defy want and reflection, nothing. This was during the rapture of his first marriage with that engaging being from whom it was said he drew Sophia. But, alas, it was a meteor, brilliant, but short lived. For soon he lost her, only to find himself more miserable in his solitude, from being plunged into the gloom of debt, and deriving relief chiefly from coarse and sensual pleasures. But peace to his manes !

“ Be to his faults a little blind,
Be to his virtues very kind.”

So said I to myself for the next ten miles of my road, but with little encouragement at this first lesson (if it was one) in my search after happiness. It effectually dissipated the belief, that genius or success in delighting the world can be always sure to command it.

I was now at Uxbridge; and who can pass the Treaty House, much less dine and sleep, surrounded by those venerable oak pannels in the room where the Treaty was canvassed day after day, till finally rejected, and the fate of England sealed;—who can do this without a thousand visions of those turbulent bad times, and a thousand reflections upon the madness of those turbulent bad men, who seemed bent upon opposing that benevolent behest of the Almighty, that all his creatures may be happy if they please. In my sleep, and indeed awake, I could not help thinking I saw Hampden and Pym, and Cromwell, and many more; Essex, Fairfax, and Manchester; less designing, perhaps, but more dangerous as tools—like the well-meaning tools of the present day;—I saw them here plotting to defeat all chance of reconciliation, in order to bring to their own profit the miseries they themselves had chiefly occasioned. Whether they made themselves, or their instruments the

people, in whose cause they pretended to act, happier by the energies they showed, was a natural question for one employed on the errand I had undertaken. I could not help fancying myself among them; and I shuddered to think how much blood was spilt, how much treasure wasted, how many ties broken which had once held men together in happy relationship; all owing either to a headlong love of power, or a self-deceiving love of change.*

With these feelings I again mounted my horse, in quest of other scenes, and, as I hoped, with fairer reminiscences. A few miles brought me to Bulstrode, the residence of one of the most respectable of our nobility, and once the most respected of the party he headed, until the madness of their conduct made him refuse to head them any longer. From that moment, with the true recklessness and violence which canker the blood of party, he was vituperated and defamed by those who for years had loved him. His crime was great, and never to be forgiven. He had identified himself with them when he thought their objects just; he had separated from them when he found them indefensible. As if an explosion which had convulsed the world could

* This observation is confined to the epoch of the civil war, from the time that the nineteen propositions were framed, from which time everything became rank rebellion.

cause no change in the face of nature! As if a volcano that had blasted whole countries could have left everything in its former state of security—every boundary equally plain, every path equally straight! The vile injustice this ill-treated nobleman was made to endure, from persons calling themselves enlightened, can only be believed by those who lived at the time, or by being actors in party warfare, know what party is. His sincerity was of course denied; his selfishness of course demonstrated; his ability despised; even his private virtues were contemned. Yet Fox (at least the *leader* of those who did this) had left Lord North, and was praised for doing so. The thoughts, therefore, prompted by Bulstrode shed no sunshine on my inquiry after happiness.

I then passed Beaconsfield, where had dwelt two personages of very unequal degrees of brilliancy indeed, but still the ornaments of their country. The life and genius of Waller, recalled by his park, might have challenged more minute attention, if it had not been for the neighbouring mansion of Burke. Waller was made for England, Burke for the world; though, as much better expressed, he—

“ Born for the universe, narrow’d his mind,

And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.”

Whether the poet was happy in the long existence he dragged on, after the loss of all pretension to consistency or firmness, which had all merged in that smooth pool of *accommodation* in which he loved to float,—may be made a question. Abilities (and Waller had abilities) often support the want of virtue, and sometimes of honour;—of which we have too many fatal instances in our own time.

Wit, eloquence, and impenetrable assurance, especially when seconded by party,—which can digest the strongest food,—enable a man often to rise above, and look down with contempt on, the homely commonplace requisites of a good character; and to such men the honourable and well-meaning weak, in their weakness, are obliged to stoop. Thus Waller, having sullied the earlier part of a long life, was endured, if not courted, during the rest of it, in an elegant but vicious society.

But pass we to Gregory's—next to Stratford, the classical land of Britain. I never could pass this house, where Burke walked, and thought, and wrote, without emotion, such, perhaps, as a Roman of the middle ages might feel on seeing the Tusculanum of Cicero:—for Burke was Cicero, and fully equal to the Roman in all the great gifts of mind, eloquence, and letters; and

not less in real love for the good order of the commonwealth. For that commonwealth he, too, broke with all his early friends, and he, too, was by them vilified, aspersed, and hated. What sort of friends they were who could thus treat him, merely because he exposed, with an eloquence beyond all other men, the dreadful consequences of a profligate ambition, history will determine, if it has not already. Be this as it may, this shipwreck of his heart in his last days, equal in its effects to the murder of his prototype, and chiefly arising from party revenge, only added to my grief in thinking that political pursuits, though they may lead to fame, can never lead to happiness.

I willingly went a few miles out of my way to see Chalfont and Hampden, where Milton sang and Hampden plotted. The earliest and sweetest notes of the poet were breathed at the first, and the treasons of the rebel concocted at the last. In these times how many will start, how many will smile, at the appellation I have bestowed on the canonized martyr of liberty. "Oh! that word of fear!" how many knaves has it not profited! how many fools not beguiled!

That Hampden of Hampden did essential service to liberty when liberty was in danger, no one can deny; and had he known where to stop, it would be difficult to praise or honour him enough.

But like almost all the great actors of the world, who have perhaps been sincere in their outset, he made patriotism only a stepping-stone to ambition ; that besetting sin by which, as Wolsey too late found out, “ the angels fell.” Was Hampden, then, the seat of happiness, when thus the seat of treason ? for it was here, as the tradition is, that, with his fellow-conspirators, he settled those plans which drenched his country in misery, although the causes of discontent were fast subsiding.

Could or can traitors then be happy ? was the question raised by my visit to this abode. It is a question best answered by him who best answers everything :—

“ Between the acting of a dreadful thing,
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream :
The genius and the mortal instrument
Are then in council, and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.”

If this be so, unless insurrection is happiness, (as it may be to some,) there was little happiness at this otherwise pleasant seat ; and so I must report it in my tour. As a balance, however, let me indulge in referring to another Hampden of Hampden, who, with his consort, made it the scene of joy, elegance, and the arts ; of music, song, and

every charm of hospitality; and who well might exclaim, with the enchanter *,

“ From these gates sorrow flies far.”

Certainly no treason, nor any design but to make people happy, has been of late fostered in those halls which, in the days we are remembering, were a secret conclave of designing traitors. The seat, therefore, of Hampden, at least in *modern* times, thus ranges itself on the propitious side of my inquiry.

On my return, as I have said, I visited Chalfont. 'Twas here that Milton heard the merry bells ring round; here that the lark at his window bade him good morrow; here that, between hedge-row elms, he

“ Wandered not unseen ;”

here also he wooed the

“ Pensive nun, devout and pure ;”

forgot himself to marble ; or—

“ On a plot of rising ground,
Heard the far off curfew sound.”

Finally, it was here, as is said, that the dawn of the “ *Paradise Lost* ” opened upon his mental sight.

Shall I go into my question with him too, and

* Comus.

ask if *he* was happy? If I wanted the truth, I would rather ask his three wives ; but—

“ We do him wrong, being so magistical,
To offer him the show of violence.”

He is so noble, that I willingly draw a veil over every thing but his nobleness, and will scarcely stop to ask whether it is possible that one with such sublimity of conception could ever be otherwise than in the Elysium of his own mind. But I fear to record the truth, that though Parnassus be filled with the sound of harp and song, with lyres divine, ennobling high deeds, and consecrating virtue in eternal numbers, her sons, even the most favoured, do not *necessarily* feel the joy they communicate.

What and where then is the object of my search—Happiness? “ Shall I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea,” to find it? I had better, I believe, pursue the journey I have begun, and get to Oxford as fast as I can. And already does that perfect tower of Maudlin rear its beautiful proportions and venerable memorials to my sight, and already beckons me to solemn musing in its walks, where Addison mused before.

From that loved tower, and those oft-visited walks, I wind with renewed sensations of delight through that assemblage of halls, and palaces, and

embattled courts, sacred from their age, as well as the design of their institutions. They are the favoured and chosen abodes of learning and philosophy; either in preparing for the world, or after retreating from it. Surely, then, it must be here, if anywhere, that content has built her cell, as fame her throne. Yet how many candidates for fame have been here disappointed! How many bosoms, which here glowed with young ambition, like Lackland, or friendship, like Gorewell, have been forced to confess that all was vanity! Even the taste for elegant and polished letters here formed, has too often not been lasting, but has evaporated, or been smothered in some Trulliber parish, some underground office, where light never came; or some monotonous desk in an inn of court, where ambition has no scope, and affluence, if it come at all, comes too late.

Yet I am wrong! For even here, if the mind be properly regulated, happiness, though un-
aspiring, may dwell; for such is the sweet power of letters, that even in the undeviating round and sameness of business, the mind, the moment it is released, may still find play, philosophy be cultivated, and the imagination peopled.

Be this as it will, the youth at least of our Universities have none of those fears of futurity;

they walk the studious cloister with a bold step and erect form ; Confidence and Hope, those ingratiating companions, interwoven in every beat of the young heart, elevate its dreams to certainty, and will not leave room in it for doubt. Oxford, therefore, or other abodes of learning, are youth's appropriate field, its camp, from which it smiles at all danger ; and Heaven forbid that we should destroy its security.

Let our youth, then, enjoy it while they can, and believe themselves the future monarchs of the world. And "when they think, good easy men, full surely their greatness is a ripening," let us not tell them of the frost that may, and too often does, come to nip their shoots, and make them fall. No ! let us leave them in full possession of the attractive picture, given by the reat allegoric poet :—

“ With Fear, went Hope, in rank, a handsome maid,
Of cheerful look, and lovely to behold ;
In silken samite she was light array'd,
And her fair locks were woven up with gold.
She always smiled, and in her hand did hold
An holy water sprinkle dipt in dew,
With which she sprinkled favours manifold
On whom she list, and did great liking show,
Great liking unto many, but true love to few.” *

To be sure the “ true love ” is rather confined

* Faery Queene.

as to its numbers; but as all hope to be enrolled among them, let not their aspirations be prematurely destroyed. From this then it should seem, that at least among the younger classes at Oxford, my observations were golden, and my inquiry successful. Science and taste open all their pages to their investigations, with a plastic power, and a freshness, which imprint every thing on their minds with a delight never to be forgotten; and hence it is, that the old are called *laudatores temporis acti*, and the days they have passed, par excellence, *beaux jours*. So much for the young, the tyros of a College, provided they are under due regulation.

But was what I sought confined to them? Had those who were advanced in the career of letters and instruction no enjoyments worth noticing? Ask a thousand matured scholars, "ripe and good ones," who in the felicitous seclusion of libraries, furnished by private and public munificence with all literary treasures, forget their hours in their happy occupation. Send them afterwards to their gardens, retired, yet not solitary; delightful, yet not expensive. There let them quaff the sweets of nature, by musing meditation made still more sweet; there let them mature by thought and recollection all that they

had pondered in the works of others; and when tired, let them listen to the birds.

It was certainly in such libraries and such gardens that Milton drew that picture of Wisdom's self oft-seeking retired solitude,

“Where with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings.”

It was, no doubt, these enjoyments which prompted that engaging sentiment of one of the most enlightened and elegant scholars of the last age, Dr. Middleton. “I was never tempted by the sweets of preferment to sacrifice the philosophic freedom of a studious, to the servile restraints of an ambitious life.”

But to enjoy this without alloy, the scholar must be in earnest; all foreign objects, all extraneous ambition must be banished. His mind may in study be transported all over the world; it may scale the heavens, or dive into the bottom of the deep; but the body must not move from the sacred spot, even in his wishes, save just at dinner time, when he bends towards his hall. And even there, who better treated by his placid fortune? A frugal, yet gratifying repast; friendly, learned, or amusing conversation; an interchange of ideas on the news of the world; or the little interests of his own community. This, crowned

with an exhilarating, but no more than needful wine cup, secures to our well-regulated Professor, or Fellow (for such we suppose him), the wish of the wise king of Castille, as happiness enough : “ Old wine to drink ; old wood to burn ; old books to read ; and old friends to converse with.”

This picture had long been before me, previous to my starting on my romantic inquiry ; nor was it made less exact or less agreeable by a few shades in the degrees of the happiness I found. Even those who were not distinguished for any great ability or great love of learning, whose life seemed monotony, from dearth of active pursuits ; even those had the blessing of content,—which many of the brilliant actors of the age most terribly want.

The second day of my visit, I found an old friend in the Christ-Church walk, where I first made acquaintance with him near ten years before, and which he had paced ever since with the same regular step (certainly not in double-quick time), an hour before dinner, after a clean shirt, that chief part of a Fellow's toilet, had put him into a proper condition for company.

So regular had been this custom of his, which I myself for four years had witnessed in the same walk, at the same time, that the walk, and the walker, were ever afterwards associated in my

memory ; so that the one seemed a part of the other. Though far off, I knew him directly by the slouch in his figure, and the solemn regularity of his stride ; and when we met, his face, manner, and whole appearance, were so unchanged, that though it was six years since I had seen him, he seemed from that time to have remained in that identical spot.

As he was a worthy man, I was really glad to see with how little alteration Time had passed over him. There was the same sleek cheek, the same unwrinkled front, and the same unclouded, though not very intellectual eye, that had belonged to him (being now past his meridian) for the last twenty years. There also seemed in his conversation the same stock of ideas ; neither more nor less ; and, certainly, the same equanimity ; which, in fact, added to this calm of a college life, gave a clue to the whole secret. Mediocrity, indeed, seemed to be his tutelary genius, which, with an undisturbed conscience, enabled him to glide smoothly over both the uphill and downhill of life. At school, indeed, they were forced to flog him into, and out of, *quæ genus* ; after which, the punishment being in his mind more annoying than exertion, if he obtained no distinction, he sustained no disgrace.

He became a decent scholar, and took a decent

degree; but pretended to no more, for fear of disappointment. Mediocrity belonged to him also in his fortune, for he had little more than his Fellowship; his wants were few, and in his scout and bed-maker he had all the retinue he desired. His happiness, you will say, was negative; but there was no interruption, nor fear of any.

Etheredge laughed at seeing such a person enrolled among the happy in my tour; but the world might compound for such a state, and not be the worse for it.

I could fill a very wide canvass with pictures of a university life, some of them, certainly, not denoting happiness. The spirit of party, no doubt, dwells there, as everywhere else; that is to say, worthy men are defamed, and unworthy men eulogized; rascals are defended, and patient merit spurned, according to the private views and feelings of individuals. There are also the jealousies and strifes of ambition, the pride of success, and the mortification of disappointment; and these in almost as intense a degree as where the prizes are higher.

But these are, happily, exceptions to the character I have drawn, rather than the character itself; and he who, when embarking on the ocean of the world, prided himself, perhaps, on having shaken off the leading-strings of Alma Mater,

may often, when encountering its billows, have wished he had never quitted her.

But is there no pedantry ? Yes ! but who shall say that pedantry, though the greatest of bores to others, is not very satisfactory to ourselves ? Pedantry there is among those who, with all their learning, know not the world ; but pedantry is not confined to Greek and Latin, nor even to books. There is pedantry in a fox-hunter, pedantry in all professions. Who such pedants as lawyers, if they have never been out of Westminster Hall ? Who, even as soldiers themselves, if never out of a camp ?

Upon the whole, then, the sum of happiness in a university life seemed to me to be great, whether as a cradle for the future votary of the world, or the asylum of him who, having acted his part, quits it.

SECTION III.

A COUNTRY SQUIRE OF THE OLD SCHOOL, MIXED
WITH A GOOD DEAL OF THE PHILOSOPHER.

“Thy greyhounds are as swift as breathed stags,
Aye! fleeter than the roe.”

TAMING OF A SHREW.

I left Oxford in a pensive, or rather melancholy mood. I stopped often to look back upon its towers, its battlements and spires, the growth of ages, and, for all that time, the parent of those who have most enlightened, polished, or protected the land. This, indubitably, was not the cause of my melancholy: but to think how soon Oxford may be overthrown, and her foundations destroyed, under pretence of the public good; how soon she may become a prey to the sinister designs of knaves, with economy in their mouths, and pillage in their hearts, distressed me.

The all-destroying fiend of mischief and robbery, under the mask of Reformation, which is too irksome for him to wear, even for the few minutes necessary to his designs, has already

whetted his beak and sharpened his talons, which, if Providence doth not fight for us, will in the end destroy these once happy seats. I say, unless Providence fight for us ; because it should seem we dare not fight for ourselves, but are left to the will of the spoiler. Oxford therefore will and must sink in the general wreck, and her magnificent institutions and august associations will be *talked* of as things that have been.

With these reflections my way was melancholy, until I was out of reach of the associations that prompted them. I then began once more to think over the object of my search, without well knowing how to pursue it.

In this temper of mind I rode on in silence (for there was little to interrupt it) over the extensive downs that encircle Ilsley, well known to every Oxford supper. These separate the county from the landscapes of Berkshire, where I longed to be ; for my spirits were not raised by seeing nothing, for many miles, but now and then a solitary shepherd marshalling his flock.

I was tired of my thoughts, and began to long for the hospitable chimneys of Speenham, which were still a long way off ; when of a sudden, over the brow of one of the downs, I beheld a company, tolerably large, both horse and foot, who came gallantly down the steep after a brace of

greyhounds, which I had not at first seen. They were in the midst of a full course, which soon ended by the capture of their prey, almost under my horse's feet. This brought me immediately in contact with some dozen of persons, gentlemen and others, one of whom, who seemed to be the master, greeted me with great civility.

His appearance was rather what we have read of, than what we now see. His large lapelled coat and slashed cuffs were ornamented with large plated buttons, on which were stamped the figure of a horse and jockey. The coat was what is called of a sad colour, but much enlivened by a scarlet waistcoat with a streak of fur round the collar. This, and a very shallow-crowned hat, denoting a fashion of some forty or fifty years ago, formed his outward costume. There was, however, a great freshness and good-nature in his countenance, and an eye uncommonly quick. He seemed about fifty years of age. He was well mounted, and at both the bow and crupper of his saddle hung the bodies of some four or five hares, which they had taken that morning; and an attendant, who had a gold binding round his hat, something between a groom and a keeper, and was as well mounted as his master, bore as many spoils at bow and crupper too.

The company having all assembled, congratu-

lated the squire on the running of his dogs. "Why, aye!" said he, "I never knew them behave better. Sir," he continued, addressing himself to me, "I think by your horse, which is as perfect at all points as I remember to have seen, you must be a sportsman, and I think you will say, you never saw a better double than that last." I entirely assented, and praised the dogs so much, that I won the gentleman's good-will, who, pulling out his watch and perceiving it was four o'clock, moreover observing that they had had a very successful day, proposed going home, and in very civil terms asked me to accompany them.

I was not sorry for the invitation, being, in truth, in need of a little diversion to my thoughts; to say nothing of my being tired of a monotonous ride, and that my new acquaintance seemed to promise food for curiosity. I excused myself, therefore, in a very *nolo episcopari* manner, and though much obliged, said I must hasten to get to Newbury or Speenham to dinner.

"If you have any engagement there," returned the gentleman, "well! but if not, as Newbury is still some miles off, and you can put up with a round of beef, which will be on the table in half an hour, we shall be delighted to have your company." Then, again, surveying my horse, he

said, "I think I never saw a more complete animal; there must be a good deal of the Arabian in him."

I did not diminish my consequence with Mr. Heartfree, (for so, he told me, was his name,) by informing him that the animal had been bred by my father, in Yorkshire. Then adverting to his invitation, I allowed that I had no particular engagement to prevent my accepting his hospitality; "only," I said, looking round me, "though this horizon is clear and pretty extensive, I do not see where anything so welcome as the repast you offer can be on table in half an hour."

"If that be all," replied Mr. Heartfree, "two minutes shall decide for you."

And, in fact, in less than that time, having got to the top of the hill, he pointed to a scene below, very pleasing, and not uncommon, I found, in the Down countries, such as in Dorsetshire and Salisbury Plain. A very narrow valley lay along the bottom, through which wound a rivulet, on whose bank rose a squire's house, a rustic church, a small parsonage, and, at most, a dozen small cottages.

Heartfree smiled to see my pleased look at this sudden discovery, which was like land to a ship at sea; and still more when a very sonorous bell from the house gave notice to the hamlet, that in

half an hour the squire's dinner would be on the table.

“ Was I not exact,” said Heartfree, “ when I told you half an hour ? You hear the notice, and I hope will profit by it. Come,” said he, “ your steed shall be treated as he deserves ; I have no doubt he is of royal blood.”

So saying, he dismounted, and leading the way to some excellent stables, saw all the horses in their proper stalls, and two or three grooms with brushes and white towels ready to refresh them. All this while his deportment was placid, having, indeed, an unaffected air of content and heartiness, mixed with great intelligence, without anything like that *brusquerie* sometimes attributed to those country gentlemen, who

“ Salute their mistress with a smack,

And friends receive with thumps upon the back.”

On entering a large wainscoted parlour in the house, plainly but comfortably furnished, we found company assembled. They chiefly consisted of those who had been present at the coursing, which I learned was a sort of periodical sport, afforded by Heartfree once a month to his neighbours ; who all seemed sincerely to respect him ; not the less I suppose for his greyhounds and round of beef. The latter would have proved excellent to stomachs less hungry than ours ;

and it was well supported by tankards of that foaming native English liquor, which, though they beat us in wine, no foreign countries ever equalled.

One very massive gentleman, a Mr. Swillington, whose horse (certainly not an Arabian) I had admired for his elephant limbs, (very necessary to support the castle on his back,) paid such assiduous devotion to this old English beverage, that no one could wonder at the immensity of the body which contained it. Upon my showing admiration, I suppose, at the frequency of his homage, he said, "Why, Sir, perhaps it would not be the worse for you, who seem but a thin sort of person, if you did so too. As for me, I am not ashamed of my John Bull propensities; and, like Boniface in the play, I eat my ale, drink my ale, and sleep upon my ale."

"And not the worse for it, I hope," said Heart-free; "at least, for that you get at Easington Hall: no stint of hops, though not a hop country."

Being asked my opinion of the beer by my fat friend, I replied with truth, that I had scarcely ever tasted any to equal, none to exceed it.

"Nor I neither," said a gentleman, by his habit a clergyman—in fact the vicar of the next parish, and who had just finished a glass—"except at my relation's, the Bishop of Salisbury's."

The conversation then turned on a gentleman who had just succeeded to an estate in the neighbourhood, and whom everybody seemed disposed to speak well of. Mr. Swillington, however, qualified his praise, by saying they must not judge too soon, for he understood, though he was reckoned a very honest fellow, he drank nothing but milk : two things wholly incompatible.

We now fell upon the sport of the day, and everybody gave credit to Heartfree for the pains he took to improve the breed of greyhounds in that country, and the good neighbourhood it promoted. All agreed that sporting was the pride of independent English country-gentlemen ; and coursing, though looked down upon by fox-hunters, might hold its head very high : and one person asked the clergyman if he ever saw better sport than that morning.

“ Never,” he replied, “ except upon the Wiltshire Downs, when I visit my relation, the Bishop of Salisbury.” Then turning to me, he asked if I happened to know the Bishop ; adding that, as he kept a great deal of company, I might probably have been to the palace ; and as, being his kinsman, he went there for a few days every year, it was possible he might have met me, though he did not remember me.

“ I remember a trait of the Bishop,” said a

very mild and rather timid old gentleman at the bottom of the table, who seemed very attentive to the conversation, such as it was. This was, as I afterwards found, one of those little squires, of better birth than fortune, who having past a year or two in London in their youth, at a greater expense than their pockets will bear, retire for the rest of their lives to live with greater ease in the country; and though years have rolled over them since their retreat, have never forgotten the early impressions made upon them by the different phenomena of the town. Of these this gentleman was in the habit of talking *ad nauseam* to his country neighbours, who he knew had grown tired of them; and the company of a stranger was always the signal to revive them. The most remarkable thing about it was, that everything went by the name of *trait*, which he always pronounced *à l'Anglaise, trate*; so that old Squire Ridgedown's *trates* had become proverbial in the country.

"I think," said the vicar, adverting to his last speech, "you must have known too little of my relation, the Bishop of Salisbury, to have been acquainted with any trait of his. I, indeed, who have a room in the palace that goes by the name of my room, might know something. But what is *your* trait?"

“ I fear I have made a mistake,” said Mr. Ridgedown, “ for which I ought to beg pardon ; I find I was thinking of the last Lord Montague, poor man, who was my neighbour, you know, at Ridgedown.”

“ But your *trate*,” said two or three voices.

“ Why, this it was,” replied the happy Squire ; “ I used, you know, in my youth to be frequently in London, and kept the best company ; my coffee-house was always the Cocoa Tree. One evening in spring I was there, when it was very full, and Lord Montague came in. I shall never forget it ; he was dressed in blue and silver, and stood with his back to the fire, with that air of nobility that belonged to him. He offered his snuff-box to a gentleman near him in a charming manner, and the gentleman said, ‘ Pray, my Lord, are you going to the Opera to-night ? ’ to which he answered, with a bow, ‘ No, I am not.’ He knew me, and I him, but I said nothing, and only drank my coffee. O ! it was a beautiful *trate*.”

Here Mr. Ridgedown ceased, and the company smiled. They had in fact heard this *trait* once a year at least, for twenty years before. But to me the *trait* was quite as important, and almost as amusing, as the relationship to the Bishop of Salisbury. Both were fertile in happiness to the

speakers, and as such I set them down in the memorandums of my tour; with an N.B., (no doubt very sagacious,) that self-consequence is a source of happiness, whether in town or country, and quite as prevalent in the one as the other.

What occupied me most was my landlord. He had certainly a jollity about him that was very agreeable to his companions; at the same time a natural good breeding, amounting to self-possession, indicating both sense, and a knowledge of things, which one does not always meet with in such an absolute sportsman as he had at first appeared. He seemed also by no means deficient in literary acquisitions, which for the most part were shown only in conversation with the Vicar. But in a disquisition on the Game Acts, he actually beat a Mr. Tellfair, an eminent attorney at Newbury, in expounding a passage in "Manwood's Forest Laws."

Yet he led on the great subject of the conversation, which was the sports of the field, the stable, and the genealogy of horses. To this last, though totally ignorant of it, I inadvertently contributed in a manner which did not raise me with the rest of the company. For having pointed to a pile of books in an old-fashioned window-seat, as indicative of his taste for reading, Heartfree observed, "Yes it is con-

venient to have them always at hand ; for when one wants to turn to a pedigree in a hurry, 'tis awkward to send all over the house for it."

" You are then fond of pedigrees," said I.

" Why, they are absolutely necessary," returned he.

" And yet," I observed, " the race of gentlemen is fast wearing out of the country. Nobody is valued for his descent now. However, I only honour you the more for it."

" Honour me!" exclaimed my host; " Race of gentlemen! Why it is of a horse-race those books treat; and if you will look at their titles, you will find them the best series of Racing Calendars in England."

At this there was a shout of laughter from many at the board; which Heartfree with some dignity checked; calling " Order, order," with such an authoritative air, as to be instantly obeyed; and then made me a handsome apology for having, as he said, led me into the mistake, by giving more importance than they deserved to the books in question. This made me only the more desirous to be better acquainted with mine host, who seemed to understand good breeding so well, yet to be as much devoted as any of his guests to subjects and topics which by no means necessarily savour of it.

The company now broke up, and rode home different ways, pleased with their morning sport, pleased with their dinner, pleased with their landlord; and though I had made so egregious a blunder, not displeased with me.

It had been settled at the hospitable Heartfree's urgent desire, that I should pass the night at Easington, to which, having really a wish to study him, I not unwillingly assented.

I was lodged in a bed and bed-room of crimson damask, which he told me had been so fitted up upon the marriage of his grandfather and grandmother: "for which," said Heartfree, "I have the greatest veneration on that account; so I hope you will not think the race of gentlemen, any more than of horses, fast wearing out in this country." And with this good-humoured remark, we parted for the night.

The next morning, though at a very early hour, I found my host had made the tour of his stables—always his first duty; and he said he had the pleasure to tell me, Godolphin (for so he was pleased to christen my steed), had fed very well, and was ready for anything I chose. "Hunting, however," he added, "is unfortunately over; coursing cannot be repeated after yesterday's long day; and I have no other lions."

"You want none," I replied, "as long as you

have got this pretty place, and seemingly complete establishment to show me ;—as I hope you will, as a crowning grace to all your hospitalities.”

“ I am glad you like me,” returned he, “ though I have been out of the world, I and my father before me, at least these sixty years.”

Upon expressing wonder at this, and wishing explanation, he said, his history was a very short one, and not worth explaining, even if it were not, as it was, necessary to go to breakfast.

Here the bell ringing loudly, we adjourned to the room where we had dined, and we sat down to a variety worthy of Scotland, and a plenty not exceeded in England.

I asked after Mr. Ridgedown, and Heartfree told he was a very harmless creature, of no sort of consequence, in or out of his parish ; but being lord of a little manor, with a fortune, though small, quite sufficient for his wants ; and moreover fond of good coursing, to which he contributed by keeping an excellent greyhound of his own ; he was sufficiently respected, and nowhere disliked, even when he repeated his “ trate” of Lord Montague, which was annually or oftener listened to, for the pleasure it gave him.

This candid account of what many people in the world might have attempted to ridicule, only raised my opinion of my landlord still more, and

I could not help complimenting him upon it. At the same time I could as little help expressing my surprise at what he had hinted, that he and his father had been out of the world for sixty years; all which time, I presumed, had been passed at Easington.

“You are right,” said Heartfree; “and perhaps you may be surprised that I have never been in London but once; for, at twenty years old, my father entered me at the Temple, with a view, not to make a fortune at the Bar, but to prevent the race of Tony Lumpkins, as he called us, being extended to the third and fourth generation.”

“And may I ask,” said I, “why his scheme as to the Temple did not succeed.”

“The reason,” he replied, “was very simple. I had been wholly educated in the country, in part at Rugby school, but chiefly at home, under our Vicar’s father; to whose son, a worthy unaffected man, very different from him you saw yesterday, I presented the living. At and under these, I imbibed so strong a taste for freedom—freedom of breathing, freedom of habits, manners, hours, pursuits; in short, such an antipathy to constraint of any and every kind, that I was ready, like the savage whom they attempted to reclaim, to throw off my fine clothes, and run

naked back to my woods. I had, besides, from the age of seven, been trained by my father himself to every sort of country sport, to which I became as great a devotee as himself. After twelve I always attended him to Ascot and elsewhere, and knew the names and characters of most race-horses before I was fifteen; and on leaving Rugby acted, if not as his huntsman, at least as his whipper-in. All these combined, made London appear to me not only without charms, but a prison, in which I was hand-cuffed, chained to the ground, and deprived of every sweet that liberty could give.

“ You may suppose what I felt ; I, who had been used from my cradle to roam the wide and pleasant fields, and breathe the fragrance of orchards, to be cooped up in what they call chambers, in fact, a dungeon ten feet square, almost under ground ; breathing smoke and looking upon coal barges and river mud.”

“ That was hard upon one of your turn,” said I ; “ but surely you saw fine squares and houses, fine men and women ; and agreeable, and, in your designed profession, learned society ? ”

“ Yes ! all these ; but with my confirmed habits, all more or less opposed and thwarted by my new way of life, they were altogether unbearable. As to fine houses, the best of them showed no-

thing but gloom, except by candle-light; and even now, when I hear the mere name of a back room in a London house, looking upon sinks and sculleries, and not a tree, though with smoke-dried leaves, to vary the prospect, and compare it with these breezy downs and extensive views, the very thought of it makes me sick.

“ I had a quarrel with a relation in St. James’s Square, which, fine as it is, is the dullest place in all London, by telling him I thought so. In return, he observed, I was a mere bumpkin not worth cultivating, and had better return to my back settlements. I did so, but not till I had confirmed all my early prejudices for the life I had led, and against that which it was proposed to me to lead.

“ As to my learned society, I found lawyers too subtle to cope with, and despaired of imitating them. I thought them pedants, and they thought me a fool.

“ Then as to the ladies, what they might have proved, had I remained among them, I know not ; but their obstinate closing up of themselves against any intimacy with what they clearly thought a country booby, contrasted with the frank manners and bloom of those I had left behind, would have disgusted me with the task of pursuing them, even if I had not, with al

their reserve, seen symptoms of design upon my supposed fortune. In short, they were too cold and forced for me to take the trouble of propitiating them. I see you think I was too hasty ; I had better, therefore, confess at once, that as to women, my interest was pre-occupied."

Here Heartfree showed signs of trouble, and I began to be afraid he had touched upon some disappointment in his affections. This I afterwards found it was not : but, alas ! worse ; for he had loved, and was loved again ; but all was blighted and lost by the premature death of his betrothed ; and his feeling upon it was so deep, that it coloured the whole character of his after life. In fact, he remained a bachelor from choice, and gave himself up more than ever to retirement, country occupations, and a more headlong pursuit than ever of country sports.

These occupations, however, were remarkable for something more than a mere endeavour to forget himself. To great activity, he joined much original thought ; he had a genius for every species of country employment ; and his mind was imbued with a love of independence, which showed itself in a manner which few can understand, fewer imitate. In a word, in the first years of his bereavement, and before his love of sporting returned to him in full force, he,

perhaps at first sheerly to divert his melancholy, conceived the design of making his estate yield him almost everything necessary to his existence, even in the station he enjoyed in the world. He designed to act, as he said, as much as possible as if he had headed a colony in an uninhabited country.

He wished to try, at least (though only as a diversion), to be his own builder, planter, farmer, and gardener; his own hunter and fisherman, of course; but also his own clothier, and tradesman, if he could. The theory which engaged him to enthusiasm was, that everything we require or use, being the produce of land and labour conjoined, he, having land, might be as usefully as happily employed in supplying all the rest. Not that by this he meant to turn handicraftsman, and be his own tailor, shoemaker, or blacksmith; but that he should be the producer of all that is called produce, for others to work upon. Accordingly, it was astonishing to observe the number of necessary, and even artificial wants he made his land supply, chiefly owing to the taste he had for being always on the spot, and directing operations.

His farm produced much more than the common viands; beef, mutton, and veal, malt, hops, flour, hay, and corn, poultry, and bacon in abun-

dance, all excellent in their kind ; but over and above this, his sheep furnished cloth and blankets from their wool, and candles from their fat ; his oxen, leather from their hides ; and his deer, sometimes a warm waistcoat for hunting in winter, and excellent soft and light boots for summer. A cloak too, of which he was rather proud, was lined entirely with hare skins of a peculiarly fine texture, owing, he said, to the nature of their food on the short sweet grass of the downs ; and to crown all, they had been cured by his own people at home.

His woods supplied fuel all over the house, of which he had generally a two years' stock ; and his garden produced everything an English garden could afford. But he would allow no glass, because his ambition was to confine himself to natural productions. He had, however, attempted a vineyard, hitherto with doubtful success ; but then his gooseberry wine, which I had tasted with pleasure at dinner, was, when iced, he thought, equal to Champagne, and many of his neighbours thought so too. His housekeeper had the credit of this, but still under his inspection ; with the help of which all his servants were trained to contribute something to these objects, in the life he had adopted.

He had the best beds, all made of the feathers

of his poultry-yard, which took two years in drying; he had even essayed flax and hemp, with a view to linen, which had failed. But no matter; he was employed, interested, and therefore independently happy.

He owned, however, that there were two or three wants which were drawbacks to his scheme, because no ingenuity or perseverance could supply them: these were lemons, tea and sugar, coffee, and brandy. "When this, however, is the case," he said, "our only remedy is to do without them. This I endeavour in the case of lemons; the brandy I consider a medicine, and within the class of the doctor's shop, which I don't pretend to emulate; and as to sugar, I have advanced so much in the adoption of honey, and will presently show you such a beautiful apiary, that you will say it is not of much consequence."

I put in a word for tea and coffee, and added, for the sake of his neighbours who might be fond of smoking, tobacco.

"As for the last," he said, "I could easily raise it; but it is a filthy thing, and I never myself smoke or take snuff. The two first, I grant you, are luxuries, and were particularly so to me; but I had the resolution to leave them off, because they militated against my principle."

I honoured him for his virtue in this, as, in-

deed, for his philosophy as well as activity in every thing ; and when he showed me his closet, I found that sporting, or rural labours, were by no means his sole occupations, and that the Rugby acquisitions had not been thrown away upon him ; a trait of character which, from his absorption in other less refined pursuits, I did not expect.

He had, indeed, a taste, not inconsiderable, for reading, though confined chiefly to what accorded with his other tastes. Thus, he had not forgotten his Virgil, at least in the Georgics ; and over the chimney-piece of his closet was written in letters of gold—"Fortunatus et ille deos qui novit agrestes."

One large book, which lay open upon a highly polished oak table, he seemed to eye with great interest, which he wished to communicate to me. It was a huge quarto, entitled, "Gervase Markham on Country Contentments," and was most massively bound, with great silver clasps. When I expressed my admiration of it, he said, with a sigh of recollection, "You know not what I owe to that book ! It was the first resource I found that seemed to charm me from a very unhappy catastrophe, which I have not yet forgotten, and which shut me up more closely than locks and bolts could do, among these downs."

He then recounted to me in part the nature of

the sad loss he had sustained, which I have already hinted at, as having tinged the earlier part of his life with sorrow. I did not attempt to check it, finding, as I thought, that it did him good rather than harm to talk of it; and as there was no affectation in it, I could not help esteeming him for his feeling.

“ This is strange, however,” he observed, “ to be opening, to one so lately a stranger, feelings which my neighbours scarcely ever witness. But as I am conscious of being reckoned a very eccentric person, and your curiosity about my way of life seems to have been excited, I have not refrained from telling you what I believe has mainly been the cause of it. But come,” he added, “ after this preface, if you are not tired of it, I will show you some of its effects; for I think you expressed a wish to see Easington in its out-door appurtenances, as well as within; and we will begin with your beautiful horse, which, by the way, I do not honour you for not inquiring about.”

I assured him my groom had made a most favourable report of his noble quarters, and the care that had been taken of him.

“ Ay!” said he, “ but you did not go to see it yourself; which, you must allow, is a fault.”

So saying, he led the way to a range of stables, and an array of dog-kennels, which might have

sufficed for a duke, and were much out of proportion to the house, which was comparatively small. Nothing could exceed their nicety or convenience; and all the out-of-door people displayed an alacrity in showing their departments, which was evidently the effect of their master's taking such an interest in it. We then visited a large out-house, which was called the laboratory. Here were cheese-presses, cider-presses, a malt-mill, a bean-mill, and, adjoining, a carpenter's shop, a blacksmith's forge, a venison-house, and wood-houses without number. He then showed me the apiary, which indeed was most pleasant. It stood under the shelter of an old stone-wall, on the side of a clear running brook, and in the middle of a plot of about half an acre of ground, set thick with all sweet herbs, wild flowers, and buck-wheat, beginning to bloom, on which these interesting insects seemed to fasten by thousands.

"Here," said Heartfree, "over and above the honey you had at breakfast, you have the material of those yellow tapers, the colour of which so moved your curiosity last night."

In fact, the clear, unadulterated lights in the parlours of Easington, all took their rise from this agreeable spot.

At the end of the enclosure the brook en-

larged itself into a stream, showing every pebble, and numerous trout, at the bottom. Here was a young lad, in all the eagerness of what the moralist Paley calls that cheerful solitude, fishing; cheerful in reality, though dull in appearance, because an emblem of hope which never abandons you. This was pointed out to me by Heartfree, who philosophized well on everything, though taken ordinarily for a mere clever Squire. He bade me observe the boy as he threw his line in different places, watching for the shade, and sometimes kneeling to conceal himself; his eye all quickness, and his face full of pleasant anxiety; now excited, now cautious, now exulting, but always eager, till success crowned his efforts, and a trout of some pounds lay gasping on the turf. He seemed an exact prototype of that very pretty drawing of Westall, which, for its nature, speaking volumes to the observer of human kind, I have often admired.

“It is my keeper’s son,” said Heartfree, “and at dinner you shall judge if the young fellow’s labour has been thrown away. When we return to the house I will show you a room which our people call Fisherman’s Hall. It is full of nets, and rods, and flies for every different month, and almost every different time of day; all made by ourselves, and affording much knowledge, I as-

sure you. Remember, however, I will not bore you with Walton and Cotton, though I can read them again and again ; but I will show you some curious matter in Gervase Markham, which will perhaps amuse you."

On returning to the house he immediately proceeded to give me the treat he had promised out of old Gervase, who seemed a prodigious favourite with him ; nor did I wonder at his own peculiarities, and fondness for his different pursuits, when I became acquainted with one who, though he lived two hundred years ago, seemed his counterpart. All that was wanting in Heartfree to resemble his master, was that quaintness and precision which so delights us, we know not why, in the old authors ; particularly in this patriarch of "country contentments." Their morality and their philosophical inferences, allowing for the difference in time, seemed pretty much the same. The book reminded me of that in the Lady's library in the 'Spectator,' which opened of itself at a scene between two lovers in an arbour ; for Gervase also opened of itself at the chapter entitled, "The Lawes of the Leashe, or Coursing, commanded, allowed, and subscribed by Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, in the raigne of Queen Elizabeth." It was dedicated to the "thrice noble and vertuous maintainer and furtherer of all lawful

and worthy pleasures, Sir Theodore Newton, Knight." The laws were certainly most sportsman-like. "No horseman or footman to go before the dogges, or on one side, but directly behind; on paine of disgrace."

"Now, can any man," said Heartfree, with animation, when he came to this enactment. "conceive a penalty more efficacious, or more terrible to men of honour,—which it is to be supposed these illustrious sportsmen were? nothing in Westminster Hall could go beyond it. Then, again, 'If anie man ride over a dogge, though the dogge were the worse dogge in opinion, he shall either receive the disgrace of the field, or pay the stake.'"

After this came hunting, which is defined, "a curious search, or conquest, of one beast over another," but there is this moral observation appended to the account:—"In this recreation is to be seen the wonderful power of God in his creatures, and how farre rage and policie can prevail against innocence and wisdom."

After this we read of hawking, which Markham calls a most "princely and serious delight," and which Heartfree said he hoped to see restored; and even himself to set the example in this fine down country, if his life was prolonged. Next was "The commendable exercise of riding

great horses, which, in the very action itself, bespeaketh gentleman to all who are performers or doers of the same." See also, "How to ride before a prince, in the gallop, the galliard, and the bounding."

Then came cockfighting, on which the panegyrist says, "Sure there is no pleasure more noble, delightful, or voyde of cozenage, than this pleasure of cocking, since many of the best wise ones of our nation have been pleased to participate therein."

"I doubt a little here," said Heartfree, pausing, "both as to the voyde of cozenage, and the best wise ones of our nation."

But Gervase had never seen Hogarth. Here, however, is a description which Buffon might have been glad to read:—"The cock is, of all other birds, the most manliest, stately, and majestic. He delighteth in open and liberal plainis, where he may lead forth his hennas into greene pastures, and under hedges, where they may warm and bathe themselves in the sunne."

"Here you see the cock," said Heartfree (in the very spirit of his precursor), "in a sort of double character, of patriarch and husband; protecting, and at the same time gallanting his ladies, like a gentleman as he is."

But now came bees:—"Of all the creatures

which are behoveful for the use of man, none more necessary, (this was before the times of sugar, said Heartfree,) more wholesome, or profitable than the bee."

He gives, however, a king instead of a queen to the hive ; but so did Virgil before him ; and he adds, what perhaps Virgil did not know, that if you lay your ear to the hive, you shall distinguish the voice of the king from the rest, " being louder, greater, and beating with more solemn measure."

But the masterpiece of Gervase, whether as a philosopher, a man of genius, or a sportsman, is in what he says of fishing.

" I will now," says he, " entreat of fishe ponds ; those laweful and praiseworthy exercises and recreations in which (with God's feare, and care of not offending his neighbour,) a man may soberly spend those hours which he may lawefully bestow in the cheerful reviving and stirring up of his spirits foredone with heavy toil."

" Now this," said Heartfree, when he had finished the passage (and I could not help echoing him), " is both eloquent, pathetic, and religious. But the best is to come. The old fisherman, as philosophic as Izaak himself, having had, I suppose, his art attacked, enters into a defence of it, which must for ever ennoble it ; for, according

to him, an angler must have all the virtues under the sun. As for his deceit, says he, it ‘worketh not upon men, but upon the creatures *whom it is lawful to beguile.*’ He must have the four cardinal virtues, and many more. ‘He must be a general scholar, to write of his art, and have sweetness of speech, to entice others; strength of argument, to defend his profession against envy and slander; knowledge of the sunne, moon, and starres, to know of weather; geography and geometry, to know the country and rivers; musicke, that whensoever eyther the melancholy heaviness of his thought, or the perturbacyons of his owne fancies shrink up sadnesse in him, he may remove the same, with some godly hymn or anthem.’

“I fear to tire you,” continued Heartfree; “but the virtues to come are best of all, for our angler must have, ‘*a well-settled and constant belief to enjoy the benefit of his expectation.*’ You see here is an absolute lesson on Faith. But farther, he must ‘feel love both to his pleasure and his neighbour; to the latter, that he may neither give offence, nor *be guilty of any general destruction.*’

“I wish the poachers would learn this,” observed Heartfree, commenting upon it.

“‘Then he must be patient, humble, not minding wet or dirt; strong and valiant, not to be

frightened or amazed with storms or thunder, *but to hold them according to their natural causes, and the pleasure of the highest.*'

"Here you see," said Heartfree, again pursuing his comment, "he must be a natural philosopher, and resigned to the will of heaven. But 'he must also be *liberal*, not working for his own belly, as if it could never be satisfied; but with much cheerfulness bestow the fruits of his skill among his honest neighbours.'

"There," said Heartfree, closing the book, "I think I have read you enough to show that we simple folk, the sportsmen, particularly the lovers of the rod, have no occasion either for a bishop or philosopher to amend our seemingly idle life: and if half what Gervase says be true, I would advise you, young as you are, to abandon your London strivings, to take up your rod, and follow me."

"If I may judge of the happiness of your life," said I, "or the health both of body and soul which it has given you, I am quite sure I could not do better; but I have neither your genius, your skill, nor your decision of mind. Hitherto, indeed, I may be said to have fooled away my life."

"I hope not," he replied; "but at least you have got a good deal of it still before you. I

suppose, however, you are too rich for a profession ; if so, make one for yourself, or you will grow rusty ; which at yours, or indeed any age, is bad."

" Agreed," said I ; " for an idle youth makes a querulous old man ; and I think business, whether voluntary or involuntary, good for the health, both of body and mind."

" With that opinion," he replied, " you will do. Are you in parliament ?"

" No !"

" In office ?"

" No !"

" In the army ?"

" No !"

" You have, undoubtedly, been in love ?"

" Fifty times !"

" Then you have surely not wanted business."

" I have had enough of it," said I, " and am retired."

" May I ask what is your present pursuit ?"

" Mankind."

" I thought," said he, " from your age and your answers, it might have been *woman-kind*."

" I am not particular," I said ; " for it is my species I wish to be acquainted with ; I therefore study both."

" Your field was London ?"

“ Yes ! ”

“ And what your success ? ”

“ Very little . ”

“ What ! not with woman-kind ? ”

“ To be sure , ” I replied , “ they flourish there as in a hot-bed . ”

“ And , as in all hot-beds , I suppose , the fruit is forced . ”

“ Something very like it , ” I returned ; “ but in the country I hope to find a natural garden . I observe you have no hot-beds in yours , yet your productions are excellent . ”

Heartfree smiled , and hoped that my natural garden might answer expectation .

SECTION IV.

A JUSTICE HALL, AND COUNTRY REFORMER.

“ Will you permit that I shall stand condemned a wandering vagabond ?”

RICHARD II.

AT that moment we observed a group of five or six men and women advancing into the courtyard, and heard them ask if his Worship was at leisure.

“ It is my constable,” said Heartfree ; “ this is my day for Justice business ; and as your game is men and women, perhaps we may start some for you.” So saying, he fitted himself to the magisterial chair, and began the usual examinations.

The real complainant was an old man, who had brought up the blacksmith of a neighbouring parish to answer for an assault upon his wife ; in effect, for forcing a kiss from her in the open street.

“ I should not have minded any other sort of ’sault,” said the old man ; “ but I am much afeard my wife was dissenting, and my peace of mind is gone for ever.”

This made us naturally turn to the parties ; and I was surprised to find the female complainant, as I thought, full sixty years old, though she afterwards assured us she was but fifty-five. As for the prisoner, he was quite as old, and the very image of a Cyclops.

The old lady gave her testimony in a very clear manner. She was as innocent as the child unborn ; she had been at the chandler’s-shop for a loaf of bread and a pound of candles, and passing by the prisoner’s house, he had rushed out upon her, and committed the offence before she could say Jack Robinson.

The husband, who had shown great distress while this was recounting, desired the magistrate to ask if she made no resistance.

“ Lard ! your Worship,” she answered, “ what could a poor woman do, with a loaf of bread in one hand, and a pound of candles in the other ?”

“ Very little, I should think,” said Heartfree, admirably keeping his countenance. Then turning to the prisoner, asked him what he had to say.

“ Please your Worship,” replied the blacksmith,

“ the truth is the best. I had no wish for a kiss ; if I had, do you think I would take up with such an old affair as that ? ”

“ I am not so very old,” cried the complainant, with some indignation ; “ being that I am only fifty-five ; and you might keep a civil tongue in your head.”

Here Heartfree interfering, asked the prisoner what could induce him to this breach of the peace.

“ Why, I did it,” replied he, “ not to hurt this here gentleman and lady, but only to aggrawate my own wife.”

“ Worse and worse,” said Heartfree ; “ but why aggrawate the good woman ? ”

“ Please your Honour,” returned the blacksmith, “ she be always jealous of me without a cause, and so, having had a tiff that morning, I swore, to show her the difference, I would go out and kiss the first woman I met, which happened to be this ; but for matter of that, I might as well have kissed my own mother.”

At this the old man said he was quite satisfied ; and Heartfree cautioned the prisoner, and discharged him : but as he had been so palpably in the wrong, ordered him to pay all the expenses. These amounted to five shillings, which the black-

smith somewhat unwillingly paid ; swearing, as he went out of the room, it was the dearest kiss he had ever had in his life.

“ Well,” said Heartfree, as they retired, “ you see the natural garden can sometimes produce fruit quite as rank as the hot-bed. Jealousy and coarse revenge, and therefore domestic unhappiness, are not confined to London. I wish we had not cases more dissolute than this among our swains.”

At this the butler, who acted as clerk, whispered his master, that there was another prisoner of a bettermost sort, being, in fact, dressed and looking like a gentleman, brought up by farmer Bullcock on a charge of burglary.

“ I am afraid,” said the butler, “ he won’t get out of it; for both the farmer and his son say they caught him in the fact.”

“ Bring him in !” said Heartfree, arranging himself in his chair ; and the attention of us both was rather excited.

The butler’s account was certainly not wrong. The culprit was dressed and looked like a gentleman ; and not only that, but had one of the most open, honest countenances a man could see. Justice, however, was to be done ; so the farmer told his tale.

It seems he rented the old parsonage house

and garden in the hamlet, the fruit of which was sold; the decayed rooms serving as a granary. There had been lately much depredation committed both on the corn and the stock of apples lodged there; which induced the farmer to keep watch; and he actually that morning saw the prisoner, after trying the door and lower windows, climb up by the help of a vine, into one of the upper chambers. He immediately sent his son for the constable, who placed him in durance, and brought him before Heartfree.

The constable, and with him two publicans of two neighbouring townships, who had come on business to the hall, also deposed to the prisoner's having been seen lurking at different houses in the neighbourhood, travelling on foot, for several days before the occurrence took place.

"I am sorry, Sir," said Heartfree, "to see a gentleman of your appearance under such a charge. I trust, as well as hope, it will turn out some mistake, and that you can account for the circumstances, though they seem in truth suspicious."

"Sir," said the prisoner, whose name, he told us, was Willoughby, "your address to me only accords with what I have heard of your urbanity; and I hope what I have also heard of your good feelings, will lead you to believe in the feelings

of others; for without that, I am afraid I shall be at least put to inconvenience in repelling this charge."

"Do you confess, then," said Heartfree, surprised, "that the charge is true?"

"All that has been sworn is true," replied the gentleman. "I certainly did try to get into the house by the door, and lower windows, and not succeeding, did climb by the vine-tree in at an upper window. But the felony I deny, and no evidence has been offered that I had meddled with any property."

"That is true," said Heartfree; "but your motive must be extraordinary."

"I have no doubt it will be thought so," replied the gentleman; "but not, I trust, by you. In fact, the room I entered had been the bed-chamber of my mother, who had lodged in the house for the benefit of the air of these downs, during her last illness, many years ago. At that time the parsonage was well kept, though now overgrown with weeds; and, as a boy, which I then was, I passed part of a happy childhood in being allowed to range all over the premises. I knew your father well by sight, and have often seen yourself, though being then a child, it is impossible I should be recollected. I own I am of a very rambling disposition, particularly among

places that were the scenes of my youth. I had also the greatest affection for my mother's memory, and being in the neighbourhood in one of these rambles, I could not resist the wish I had to visit the chamber where I had often seen her under her sufferings. It is certainly true I ought to have inquired for the owner, and asked leave; but not knowing him, and acting too often from impulse, without thinking of consequences, I neglected that duty, and cannot complain that I am brought here to answer for it. This is all I have to say."

Heartfree, during the latter part of this account, seemed somewhat affected. I was so myself, (perhaps had a fellow-feeling for a brother Rambler,) but I was surprised to see the rustics about us also disposed to be moved; all but Bulcock, the accuser, who evidently thought his apples and corn were more the objects of the prisoner than his mother's bed-chamber.

As a justice, however, Heartfree thought it was necessary for Mr. Willoughby to account for his lurking about the neighbourhood on foot, and to ask whether he knew anybody in that country, to whom he might refer.

"I have no account to give," replied Willoughby, "for what it has pleased people to call lurking, other than the pleasure of being free to

roam where I like, when upon little expeditions of this kind. If I come to a pleasant place, I stay as long as it lists me; if not, I move to another. I am disposed to see and know everything I can of the people I meet with, and therefore freely converse with them, and ask questions, which, among higher ranks, good breeding forbids; and as to journeying on foot over these downs, it is because of their pleasantness, and my having no objection to sojourning a short time in any clean public-house I can find, where, though entertainment for man and horse is advertised, I am by no means sure of finding the latter. My horses are at this moment at Newbury."

"It is a pity, Sir," said Heartfree, "they are so far off. It is my duty to inquire, before I can discharge you, which I shall most gladly do, if this part of your account be confirmed. Till this is done, I am afraid you will be detained till we can send to Newbury—unless, indeed," added he, looking hesitatingly at Bullcock, "the prosecutor will consent to your discharge."

All the audience looked at Bullcock with a palpable hope that he would do so; but the churl positively refused.

"Maister Heartfree," he exclaimed, "I insist upon the law taking its course. But this be

always the way with you gentlemen, favouring one another at the expense of the poor. It is time that there should be reform, when things go on at this rate; and I tell you fairly, if you do not commit this man, with his cock-and-a-bull story about his mother, I will petition the Lord High Chancellor, and have you turned out of the commission."

Everybody in the hall was hurt, for Heartfree was both beloved and respected; and they looked at Bullcock with the aversion he deserved.

"Ay! ye may look," said he, with impenetrable assurance, "but I care not a rush; you do not deserve to be free, when you 'courage a man because he is a gentleman. But worse luck for England if all this be not soon altered."

The prisoner then requested to be allowed to send a messenger to Newbury for his horses, and a letter to the master of the inn which had been his head-quarters for the last fortnight; which was instantly granted.

Heartfree all this while showed great patience, till the orator Bullcock had closed, when he said,

"Bullcock, your threats are as ridiculous as your disrespect to me in my office has been great. I should be justified in binding you over for your insolence, but your malevolence is too contempti-

ble. I shall, however, strictly do my duty by you, and also to the person you have placed at the bar, who, having certainly committed a trespass, must be made answerable for that, if you insist upon it, but no more. For there being no evidence even offered, that he entered your house with an intent to rob; and as it was in the day-time, and the window open, the felonious part of the charge fails, and there is not a pretence to suppose a burglary. I shall therefore discharge him on his own recognizance to appear at the sessions for a trespass, provided the messenger he has sent to Newbury confirms his report of himself. Till which time he must remain under custody. And now you may petition the Lord High Chancellor as soon as you please."

By this time the whole hamlet, and one or two neighbouring gentlemen, had assembled in the hall, and a sort of buzz of approbation began to be heard, which Heartfree instantly stopped. The best was, that the vicar, Mr. Broadbent, of whom we have made honourable mention, (not the relation of the Bishop of Salisbury,) having heard that a gentleman of the name of Willoughby had committed a burglary, and being struck with the name, immediately left a sermon he was writing for the next Sunday's discourse, and hastened to the

hall, where, as soon as he had cast his eyes on the prisoner, he said—

“ Mr. Heartfree, this gentleman I have long known, as a particular and worthy friend ; I am convinced the accusation cannot be true, and I will bail him to any amount.”

To this Heartfree replied, that felony not having been even stated, no bail was necessary ; and if Mr. Broadbent would confirm Mr. Willoughby's account of himself, he should be discharged without waiting the return of the messenger from Newbury.

The vicar instantly went into particulars ; related that he had known Willoughby at college, and ever since ; that he was a man of fair, though not large fortune, which he chiefly spent in tours and rambles ; and that from following his feelings, or the whim of the moment, without much thought of consequences, nothing was more likely than the conduct that had been described. This account, as to his station in life, was afterwards still farther confirmed by the appearance of a groom and two handsome horses in the courtyard, and a letter from the master of the inn at Newbury ; and, accordingly, Mr. Willoughby having shaken hands with Broadbent, and entered into his recognizance, was discharged from custody.

Bullcock, nothing daunted, but looking like a fiend at all of us, swore there was not an honest man among the gentlemen of England, nor would be till all lords and parsons were put an end to. He then mounted his horse and proceeded to Newbury, to lay his case before a provincial counsel, a Mr. Snarl, who said there was excellent ground for a petition to the Chancellor to dismiss Heartfree for malversation in his office.

To finish this part of the story, Mr. Willoughby was prosecuted by Bullcock at the Sessions, and fined a shilling; and the patriotic prosecutor having asked for his expenses, was refused; which certainly did not lessen his gall, or improve his good will towards everybody above him; while those below him, who hated him for his oppression as Overseer of the poor, triumphed in seeing him prosecuted in his turn, and convicted of false accounts. For this he was properly sent for six months to the County Gaol, by the King's Bench.

The incidents I have related made the morning in which they occurred one of the most interesting, as well as amusing, I ever passed. The good sense and clearness of Heartfree, added much to the esteem I had conceived for him; and his several hobbies, which he rode as well as he

did his real horses, only rendered him more agreeable.

I must not omit that he requested Willoughby to dine with him, to meet his old friend Broadbent; and our quartette at dinner was all the better for the adventure of the morning.

SECTION V.

HAPPINESS OF A WANDERER.

“A good traveller is something at the latter end of a dinner.”

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

OUR conversation after dinner naturally turned upon Willoughby's (to us) strange way of life. But he defended it by saying—“Every man to what his own genius or feelings lead him to follow.”

“That is a sentiment,” said I, “which many a man of genius has rued; at least, so said my father, who had no genius, but a great deal of sense.”

“A lesson,” said Willoughby, “which you have no doubt followed yourself.”

I own I felt a little embarrassed, though Willoughby was too ignorant of my life and habits, as well as too good-natured, to criticise them.

“I think your rambling life must be at least entertaining,” said Heartfree.

“To no one but myself,” replied Willoughby; “though, for myself, I am so carelessly consti-

tuted, that with a little imagination, I can draw entertainment out of a straw."

"A happy turn," said Heartfree; "and, no doubt, you have profited by it. Were you ever abroad?"

"Yes! at the glorious age of five-and-twenty; when I cared not what country I was in, how I travelled, or whether I went a hundred miles or one in a day."

"I suppose you were well furnished with letters of introduction," said his friend Broadbent.

"Not one! But with money in my pocket, and at that age, I trusted to myself and to chance for happiness."

"And did you find it?"

"Often; though in different colours: sometimes brilliant, sometimes sombre. Sometimes, indeed, not often, I was a little checked; but, for the most part, happy."

"Pray what may have been your brilliant colours?" said Broadbent.

"Why, once I confessed a Nun, who took me for a Bishop."

"Confessed a Nun! who took you for a Bishop!" exclaimed the Vicar.

"Yes! it was during that revolution in France, when the Convents were all dissolved, that a poor girl was turned into the street, with not more than

a night cap for her portion. There she might have starved, but for a poor old Aubergiste of the *ancien régime*, who shared her bread and water with her. I had put up at the auberge in one of my foot peregrinations, such as I have lately been upon. The Nun was not only starving, but ill, and thought herself dying; and the greatest unhappiness was that she could not be confessed; since both she and the Aubergiste thought there was no salvation for her, except through a priest of the old school. Hearing her story, and tolerably well furnished at the time, I sent her a couple of gold Louis. They were astounded, and laying their heads together, resolved I could be nothing short of a Bishop in disguise, endeavouring to escape; and they implored I would save the poor Nun, by confessing and giving her absolution."

"And did you?"

"Not at first; but they went on their knees; and the Nun said she already felt the claws of the devil, from which confession alone could relieve her; so at last I complied."

"No doubt the result was curious."

"The result was that I found her an innocent, simple young creature, who had been trepanned from her father, a German Protestant of Hesse Darmstadt, and converted and professed in a low

convent ; and as it was but a hundred miles off to Darmstadt, I persuaded her to go back to her family. I asked the Aubergiste to take charge of her, but she refused, because she said she would be reconverted to the wicked Lutherans."

"And how did you succeed at last?"

"Why as I had taken two places in the diligence, and the Aubergiste would not go, I thought it best to go myself, and providentially delivered her to her father, *intacta et intemerata virgo*, I assure you. The old man overwhelmed me with gratitude."

"This I allow," remarked Heartfree, "is roaming to some purpose ; and could I be so rewarded, I would roam too. But you were checked sometimes in your adventures ; were any of them like that of to-day?"

"Not unlike it," replied Willoughby ; "only, as to danger, a great deal worse ; for I was once arrested, for having the same name and the same coloured coat and waistcoat as another Willoughby, guilty of treason ; was ordered without trial to Paris to be guillotined ; and only escaped by their catching the real traitor. I was, however, banished the Republic, merely for my name's sake."

"Perhaps that was lucky," said Broadbent.

"Very ; for the most pleasing friendship I ever

made in my life arose out of it. Unwilling to return to England, I chose Switzerland for the place of my banishment, and there indulged to the utmost my taste for wandering. I set myself down wherever there seemed the most promise of being repaid, by observing the manners and characters of the people. Wherever I went I made acquaintances, by no means confined to the higher orders. All the peasants, men, women, and children, particularly the last, if I stayed long enough in a place, became my friends. I visited their cottages, and sometimes the châteaux of their lords, without knowing them. One in particular struck me for the beauty of its views of rock, tree, and waterfall. I was almost always there; and generally attended by my little retinue of bare legs, plaited locks, and straw hats. It attracted the attention of the Lord, the old Baron de Montigny, one of the worthiest of the Swiss noblesse. He saw me several days, and at last spoke to me. Fond of my romance, and fond of the English, it ended in an intimacy. I was introduced to all his friends, became a favourite without knowing why, and at last an inmate without knowing how. I seemed adopted. I suppose I amused them; for I stayed with them, off and on, but chiefly at the château, two years."

“Two years!!”

“Yes! my motto was ‘*Fortuna sequatur*,’ and never were two years more happily spent. The family were all highly educated, and they almost educated me; at least they added greatly to whatever I had before.”

“Perhaps,” said I, “there was a Mademoiselle de Montigny?”

“There was—and she taught me French admirably; but she was betrothed, and luckily I was not in love. My heart was probably the happier for it. I had leisure to admire Nature in her grandest as well as loveliest attire. We lived a primitive life: the Baron was as fond of roaming as myself; we studied character and mountains in all their varieties; the alarms of the world seemed shut out; I was my own master, and had no care but to please and be pleased in this happy family. This was the happiest part of my life. At intervals I walked over the Cantons before I quitted my friends. I have corresponded with them ever since, and I never think of their character without feeling a sort of elevation in my own.”

We all congratulated Willoughby on this pleasant result of his taste for roving.

“It had, however, another result, of which,” said he, “I know not whether to complain or

not. It totally unfixed me for any settled pursuit; or rather it fixed me for ever in being unfixed. I was not rich enough to marry, nor poor enough to constrain myself in a profession. A month in a place was the outside of my residence anywhere; all my possessions, save what are in the funds, are confined to my horses and port-manteau; and to be told I must be at a given place at a given time is always the greatest of my misfortunes."

"Except when you break into other people's houses," said Heartfree, laughing.

"That is too true," returned Willoughby, "for I am already more seriously punished than you imagine, by being forced to appear at the next sessions at Reading. In fact I believe I have something of the gipsy in my blood, and had I been sent to prison this morning, if my fellow-prisoners did not amuse or interest me by their characters and manners, I should have pined myself to death."

"You visit London, of course," said I.

"I do, but London is not my field. I can there study higher characters, but not the lower,—which the *bienséances* prevent one from examining."

"Yet there are St. Giles's and Wapping, as well as St. James's," said Heartfree.

“ True ; but those are too filthy, and not what my taste particularly seeks.”

“ But a philosopher ought to have no, or rather all, tastes,” said Broadbent.

“ I have miscalled myself,” returned Willoughby, “ if I have assumed that character. I am rather a denizen of nature ; that is to say, I love the air, the mountain, and the field ; and still more I love to study a peopled village. In this respect I swear by a favourite of mine, Hobbie Eliot, in Sir Walter Scott’s Black Dwarf—‘ A your folk at that weary Edinbro’—I wonder what they can find to do among a whcen ranks o’ stane houses, wi’ slate on the tap o’ them, that might live on their ain bonny green hills.’ ”

We laughed at this sally, and Heartfree said—

“ As you are fond of the country, it seems a pity you have not laid out some of your fortune in land, which might furnish you with perpetual interest and amusement.”

“ I want neither,” answered Willoughby. “ Had I a stated residence, I should find myself too straightened, and saddened even in the largest house, and amplest domain ; to say nothing of my fortune not being large enough. As it is, the whole United Kingdom seems mine, and the Continent to boot, should my sovereignty be tired

of home. In a word, my philosophy is a little upon the peripatetic; I love space and comfort within-doors, it is true, but still more, fine air and beautiful landscapes to walk in without; and all this I have, at little or no expense."

"Pray tell us how?"

"Why, when I tell you that a perfumed hay-barn, and beans and bacon, are a feast to me, such as no king can exceed, my in-door comforts are told."

"But should it rain, or freeze?"

"Why, then the observation is realized—'the warmest welcome's at an inn.'"

"But the solitude of an inn life—!"

"Is delightful. There is, in fact, no solitude. There is the landlord, who tells you all the news the fortunes, characters, and history of the neighbourhood; and the landlady and chambermaid, who slipslop delightfully, in recounting all the great and noble personages who have inhabited, perhaps, the very bed they have allotted you. This is the high life of an inn, whereas in other high life, the actors are masked; but if you want something less sophisticated, or more fertile in food for philosophy, as well as for the body, there is the never-failing resource of the kitchen."

“The kitchen!” cried Broadbent, full of surprise, “what can philosophy gather there?”

“O! everything! human nature in epitome—a moving panorama—a magic lantern; all sorts of characters, though not all conditions of life. But ask Mr. Fielding, or rather his ancestor, for the Towhouses, and Partridges, and recruiting serjeants; ask Sterne for the Trims, Obadiahhs, and Susannas, which so much delight us from boyhood to manhood, and from manhood to old age. Depend upon it none of these are worn out, but are all to be found in their veriest and most pleasant identity, in that much-affronted, injured receptacle of true nature, which you seem so to despise.”

We were all greatly amused at this ebullition. Heartfree said it was true; Broadbent, that he had never searched for it; I, that I would never in future miss it.

“Observe, however,” continued Willoughby, “to taste the pleasure of an inn life, you must have a talent for it; your heart and mind must be open, your spirits alive, your good-humour in good order. No crossness, no poutings, because waiters cannot be like a bird, in two places at once; still less are you to yawn for dinner, or even for bed, if not tired. But see the world,

which never fails you there, though you only stand at the door and watch travellers, whether in stage-coaches or coaches with coronets. All are bent upon some kind of interests, great or small. The politician, the electioneerer, the man of commerce, the man of the turf, the man in love. Thus you are in the very bustle of the world without its inconveniences. But if you wish for solitude and meditation, there is generally a garden, or a retired lane, or a grandee's park, where you may philosophize."

"Excellent!" said Heartfree, willing to hear more. "We will grant you your inn pleasures, because you pay your bill; but if you choose to have no land of your own, what will you do for the fields and groves you are so fond of, but do not possess?"

"Fields and groves I do not possess! Why, I told you I possess the whole island! I have forests and parks, lakes and mountains, all at my command. Every man's domain is mine the moment I see and like it; these downs are mine; Easington is mine; that is, while I am permitted to visit, and therefore enjoy them. The enjoyment is the true possession; the law, indeed, nominally makes them yours; the difference is, that you have the trouble and expense, and I the pleasure. Strictly speaking, the parks and

lawns, and oaks and coverts I admire and thus enjoy, are not mine; but are they more the grandee's who calls and thinks them his? He is only, like myself, a sojourner and pilgrim, who may be called upon to quit to-morrow. To be sure I may grow tired of the place; but so may he; and with this difference, that *I* may move and find another—*he* cannot."

"Bravo!" we cried, and Heartfree said it was quite clear that a wanderer, with much imagination, and not too much money, was richer than a man with ten thousand acres.

"Add, if you please," said Willoughby, "that we are not so likely to be debauched by our riches. We cannot, if we would, enter into the follies and wickedness which sometimes spring from overgrown wealth. A man "indifferent honest" like me, (notwithstanding the adventure of this morning,) may be kept so, or at least be free from envy and crime, if he only enjoy other people's possessions as I do: whereas I observe that one acre only begets a desire for a thousand; and thousands create a wish for more, if only one. 'O! si angulus ille qui nunc denormat agellum!' But of this there is example in Holy Writ, at least as old as Ahab and Jezabel, who committed murder to get a paltry vineyard."

“Upon my word,” said Broadbent, “I will take my next sermon from the story of Naboth.”

“Unless Mr. Willoughby,” said Heartfree, “will write a treatise himself on the impolicy of the Act against Vagrants.”

We all, however, thanked Willoughby for the instruction, as well as amusement, his recital had given us; and, for my part, I set him down among the happiest in my Journal; and so reported both him and Heartfree in a letter to Etheredge; and I might perhaps have added Broadbent to the list.

We passed the whole of the next day with Heartfree and the Vicar, whom I found what Heartfree had called him,—a plain, sensible man, very different from his brother Vicar, who talked so much of his relation the Bishop of Salisbury. Being Sunday, we attended him to church, where all his parishoners, except Bullcock, showed him much respect. Indeed, as Bullcock never entered a church, except when obliged as a parish officer, and only rarely attended meeting, Broadbent was surprised at the honour he did him; but we found it was only to satisfy his curiosity to see the strangers, one of whom he said was a proved vagabond, and the other no better than he should be, notwithstanding their horses. He

had been told also, it seems by Counsellor Snarl, to watch any marks of intimacy between the Squire and Willoughby, as an aggravating circumstance in the petition to the Chancellor for the dismissal of the former from the Commission.

The impudence of this man, and his character for discontent, were also far from being curbed by the sacredness of the place. This showed itself, whenever the king was mentioned, by a significant shake of the head ; and when the prayer for the Royal Family and all Bishops were read, he closed the book with a loud clap, looking the minister full in the face, that all might observe him. But his conduct was most felt by the poor clerk, who, being equally fond of the 100th and the 104th Psalm, and having given out the latter, though thinking all the while of the former, began with the well-known words,—“ All people.” This occasioning a little puzzle, Bullcock could not help chuckling, and called out from his seat, “ Sam. Stave, thee beest not fit to be a clerk ; thee dost not know thy business, nor one psalm from another.”

Broadbent with authority told him to be silent ; and afterwards gave us an excellent practical discourse, in which, as it happened, he touched

upon the respect due to the sacred place, and the ministers of religion ; observing, that where that was lost, it was a strong indication that religion itself was lost too.

We had the pleasure of observing that this was properly applied by the simple folk who heard it, for they all turned their looks towards Bull-cock, who “grinned horribly a ghastly smile.” All the rest of the day passed peaceably, and at one o'clock I might add merrily ; for at that hour, divers brown dishes, full of hot savours, smoaked, under the conduct of many a neat handed Phillis, who bore them, each from the bake-house to her family ; which made the Sunday still more what it ought always to be, a day of gladness as well as of prayer.

This enjoyment of the Sabbath by the lower orders of the community, has always appeared to me one of the rays of real pleasure belonging to their lot, which tend towards a balance of happiness between them and the rich ; who, from every day being Sunday with them, can have no knowledge of it. But all pride and pleasure are, with the poor, resolvable into Sunday.

“Ah ! si vous voudriez me donner,” said a poor French peasant once to my mother, “une vieille mouchoire de poche, *pour me moucher* le Dimanche !”

In fine, nothing could be more orderly, or apparently contented, than the rustics of this hamlet; where, to quote the pleasing description of Gray, writing of Grassmere, "All was neatness and happy poverty, in its simplest and most engaging attire."

SECTION VI.

CHANGES AMONG COUNTRY GENTLEMEN.

“So sickened their estates, that never shall they abound as formerly.”

HENRY VIII.

I BADE adieu to this pleasant nook, seemingly much more remote from the world than it actually was, with feelings of absolute regret. The unaffected simplicity and primitiveness of Heart-free's life ; his perfect independence, unsoiled by any bad passion, or unattainable ambition ; his manly, useful, and healthy occupations, and the real patriarchal manner in which he lived with his neighbours ;—all this quite charmed me.

It is this patriarchal mode of living that so sweetens what we now rather read of, than see in the present day. I was observing this to Heart-free, and thought him peculiarly lucky, though only sixty miles from London, and all about him crowded with the effects of luxury, commerce, and speculation, to enjoy the life of his choice in

a manner so unsophisticated. "This," said I, "in almost a home county, to one of your turn, must be agreeable beyond calculation."

"Why, yes!" he replied. "I owe much to the sort of insulated situation of my dwelling, protected by these verdant mounds, which shelter me from all I would avoid ; yet easily passable, if I wish to view the world. It is the very epitome of what ought to be a moderate man's life. My neighbours, therefore, are of a simpler sort and character, than in richer, more enclosed, or more populous counties, such as Middlesex, Hertfordshire, and parts of Kent and Essex, where villas start up almost as plentiful as trees, and London pours forth all its myriads of insects of an hour, born of a sun-beam, and who scarcely know how they came there. These, certainly, come not within that description of country gentlemen of whom one reads with such fondness in ancient lore ; the right worshipfuls of our friend Gervase Markham, and still less of the De Coverleys, whom it is almost a duty now to quiz and laugh at.

"I am quite aware of all the convincing arguments of the Economists, the upholders of Stocks, and the enemies of the rights of primogeniture, as well as of small farms, to the increase, you will say, of our wealth, and the destruction of our

kindly feelings. But wealth and happiness, young as you are, I need not tell you, are not the same thing. Let the money calculators prove ever so clearly, that more wealth will flow into our coffers for it, I never was, and never will be, a friend to the destruction of small farms. And why? If it enrich any one, it is only him who was rich before; while it reduces an industrious class, comparatively low, indeed, in circumstances, but high in their little pride of what they thought independence, to the servile lot of mere labourers.

“How feelingly did poor Goldsmith, seventy years ago, portray this!—

‘ One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.
Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where *wealth* accumulates and *men* decay.’

“But I will not tire you with what must be so familiar to you, however pathetic, and however true.”

Seeing him quite moved with his subject, I told him I could never tire of matter so treated, and requested him to go on.

“There is a little, and but a little more to remember,” said he; “but that is too emphatic ever to be forgotten.

‘ Princes and Lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country’s pride,
When once destroyed can never be supplied.’

“ Is not this true ? ” continued he, “ and shall we ever see again the time,

‘ When every rood of land maintained its man ;
His best companions innocence and health,
And his best riches ignorance of wealth.
But times are altered, trade’s unfeeling train
Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain.’

“ One of these cold theorists,” he added, “ came once to visit me. I received him as well as I could, and was rewarded in the next Sunday paper, by seeing my whole life criticised, and my amusements decried as being mere encouragements to idleness, and disabling so many persons as were employed from being profitable to the state. They *added* nothing, it was said, to the value of either labour or produce, consequently ought to be reformed. I shall be glad to know of the monied interest, as they call themselves, what additions of wealth are derived from the legions of stockbrokers, clerks, and accountants, all busy from morning till night, not in profitable production, but in the service of gamblers, quite as much sharpers as the blacklegs of the hells ; but who, because they throng the city, are deemed men of business, and therefore of value ? These immense and overgrown excrescences have already destroyed almost all that remains of that character which you are pleased to call patri-

archal, and which you so love; and you may look in vain for it, not merely sixty miles from London, but I verily believe six hundred, if the Highlands of Scotland extend so far. Certain it is, that to the Land's End to the west, and beyond the Percies to the north; all over the once rural Yorkshire and Lancaster, and even the pastoral Wales, you will find as many manufacturers, soap-boilers, and sugar-bakers, as squires, in a fox-hunt; squires are at least turned bankers; and all bankers are squires. Accordingly, a relation of mine lately wrote me word, that calling at a great provincial house with a bill he wished changed, he found a friend of his, who had just won the Derby, and whom he had left at Epsom, with a pen behind his ear, perusing his ledger. Some time after, he fell in with a hunt, where the fox was run to earth; and he made up to a bevy of scarlet coats who were in eager discourse, as he supposed, upon the best mode of unkennelling him. He found them all discussing the dividend on the estate of the master of the hounds, of one of the oldest families in the county, but whose house of business had become bankrupt, and his whole property was ordered to be sold."

"This is but a poor picture," said I, "of the present state of society, but, I trust, a little overcharged. You surely would not condemn trade?"

"God forbid! but I would not promote it to

the pitch it has reached, if it only added to the wealth, not to the happiness of a nation."

"What," said I, "could England do without it?"

"Do as the natives do on the continent, who have comparatively none; but who contrive to spend millions at our expense, and to be happier than we are, in the proportion of millions to hundreds."

"But," continued I, "would you forbid men, merely because they are commercial, from mixing with the sportsmen of the field?"

"By no means," said he, "but I would prevent, if I could, the sportsmen of the field from riding into the counting-house of the merchant. It is the altered character of our country-gentlemen, once the pride, the resource, and the comfort of England, that I lament. But all this comes from luxury, and the funds. Weighed down with eight hundred millions on our backs, who can now indulge the patriarchal life? But even this I would pass (for we must pay our debts), if it was not for all-corroding luxury, which by creating perpetual wants and perpetual rivalries, reduces everything to a cold and calculating selfishness, and renders it impossible you should ever again see those days you talk of."

"Except at Easington," said I, squeezing his

hand, and taking leave of him. Then mounting my horse, which still engaged his attention with pleasure, I lingered slowly along the downs, that I might not too soon be out of sight of a place where all I had seen of the sense, turn of mind, and hospitality of the owner, had so much gratified me."

SECTION VII.

A MORALIZING BUTCHER—MORE OF COUNTRY
REFORMERS.

“ The very best man at a beast, my Lord, that e’er I saw.”

MIDSUM. NIGHT’S DREAM.

You may be sure I classed Heartfree, and all that I had met with at his abode, among the favourable incidents of my tour ; all, save and except the amenities of Cato Bulcock ; the effect of whose feelings upon himself, I had a sort of desire to ascertain, but knew not how. A discontented man, thought I, can never be a happy one ; and his morose countenance, and shaggy, treacherous, yet threatening brows, seemed to haunt me. In this humour, being now out of sight of the happy Easington, I began to push on to Speenham, where Willoughby, who had departed by moonlight the preceding evening, had promised to wait for me. I, however, found myself suddenly in company ; for a man well

horsed had galloped after us in the direction from Easington, and immediately began talking to my groom, whom he seemed to know. His one spur and blue sleeves left no doubt of his calling; and in effect he was a fair sample of what is almost proverbial in England, "a jolly butcher." As these gentry do not stand upon much ceremony, are full of news and gossip, with words at command, and much presence of mind, which they learn in the course of managing unruly cattle, this new acquaintance rather fell in with my humour, and the scope of the object I was upon. I was not, therefore, sorry to see him quit my groom to accost me; and riding side by side, our introduction was short enough. He told me he was a butcher—his name Chine; he had been at a neighbouring fair after a lot of sheep, and as his way lay through Easington, he had stopped to take a horn of ale at the squire's; had seen me set off, and as his way was the same as mine for two or three miles, hoped there was no offence if he offered to bear me company. Perhaps, too, he might be of some service, as 'them down-tracks,' he said, "were the most puzzlingest things in the world to persons not used them."

To all this I assented, rather pleased in the hope of finding some amusement in my fellow-

traveller, who, besides, would have won me by civility alone; for when I gave a civil assent to his proposal, he said—

“I see now you are a real gentleman, and I would rather ride out of my way with one such, than go a shorter one with a stiff, buckram alderman, or even the Mayor of Newbury.”

At this he fixed his eye upon me, (a very quick one,) as if he had been surveying a bullock. His countenance, however, was fresh and open, and his limbs had an alertness as he rode, which seemed to increase his own spirits, and much assist those of his horse. In short, he was the picture of an accomplished butcher.

“You have seen me, then,” said I, “at Mr. Heartfree’s?”

“O, yes!” he said—“I was in the parlour when old Growler made such a fool of himself, and was so sacy to the Squire, and that odd gentleman that was taken up for robbing his mother.”

“Not quite that,” said I, laughing, “for he robbed nobody; and his mother has been dead twenty years.”

“Well,” returned Chine, “I was not there till the end, but that was what the folk said.”

“But who is old Growler?” I asked.

“Why, who can it be but Bullcock?”

“ Whom you,” I said, “ don’t seem to like.”

“ Like ! who can ? He growls at everything ; his own father, when he was alive, whom he used so like a brute, that he broke his heart ; and they do say he now often appears to him.”

“ What was his conduct to his father ?” asked I.

“ Why, he got a woman to swear a child to him, and it turned out on the trial, that he was the father of it himself.”

“ Indeed ! How was that proved ?”

“ The woman confessed it upon her cross examining ; the whole Court cried shame, and the old man was honourably acquitted. But he never held up his head afterwards ; never was his own man again till he died.”

“ Nor the son either, one would suppose.”

“ O, yes ! but he was ; for both he and Snarl, who was counsel against his father, declared that the old gentleman had given the woman money to swear falsely, and they were both as peart as ever afterwards. However, they do say that this here Bullcock can’t sleep o’ nights for horrid laughs that he hears all about the chamber ; though neither he, nor his wife, can see anything. But still in the day time he growls at everybody, and everything, particularly those above him.”

“ And how with regard to those below him ?”

“ Why them he bullies. He is false too, they

say, to his wife, and beats her when she complains. He is always talking of all being equal ; but his equality seems to be, to pull down his betters, and keep down his inferiors. However, he is under a persecution for cheating the parish."

" Upon my word," said I, " a very worthy person, and quite qualified to reform the State !"

" Why he do say, sometimes," observed Chine, " that if right was right, he might be in Parliament, and then we should have the loaf at fourpence, and meat two-pence a pound. But as for that there last, sartainly I should know, and he is quite wide of the mark."

" Can such a man be happy ?" said I.

" Yes ! if plaguing his neighbours be to be happy. But then that is the sort of happiness which they say the devil has ; from which I would rather be excused. For with such rages as I have seen him in, and hated by all, he owns himself his only pleasure is revenge ; and that makes that he be so thick with Counsellor Snarl. But neither that nor his revengeful temper would, I think, make him happy ; nor would I change lots with him for all he ha' got, though he be much richer than I."

" I believe you are quite right there," said I ; " but I suppose that if he is convicted of cheating the parish, the Counsellor will cut him."

“Not a bit of it,” returned Chine: “You see they all belong to the same click at elections; and then, good and bad, rotten and sound, hang together like a rope of onions.”

I smiled at this ebullition; but Chine added, “Why, it is no more, they say, than what gentlemen all do yonder, in the Parliament House itself, where they call one another all sorts of names—thief, rogue, and liar—and yet nobody the worse for it.”

“Upon my word, Mr. Chine,” said I, “you are a great observer; and I shall be afraid to ride with you.”

“I hope not, Sir,” he replied. “I hope no offence. I meant none; but seeing you were a friend of Squire Heartfree’s, I thought I mought speak my mind.”

“You are quite right,” I replied; “and I am glad you like Mr. Heartfree’s friends. You are all fond of him, I see.”

“He is the best gentleman that ever broke bread,” answered Chine; “and would be quite perfect, but for one fault.”

“What can that be?” said I, with curiosity.

“Obstinacy,” he replied.

“How so?”

“Why he will continue in his own opinion,

that it is good for a gentleman to kill his own beef and mutton. They say he constantly loses, and yet he goes on."

"I am sorry he loses," said I.

"Why, you see," returned he, "how could it be otherwise? I have told him fifty times it is a losing consarn; its bad for the tradesman, bad for the public, and not a bit better for gentlemen. Farming is very good," says I; "for a rich man, if he stick to corn, because he can afford to dress his land so well. If he lose, he need not mind the loss, which all goes into poor people's pockets, and the land is improved notwithstanding. But if he attempts feeding, as he can know nothing about beasts, he is sure to lose, and nobody the better for it."

"Indeed," said I; "Mr. Chine, you, at least, understand your own business exceedingly well; nay, I think, might belong to the Board of Agriculture, as well as to the Butchers' Company. However, you seem to have business enough, and spirits enough, to get on happily in the world, even though Mr. Heartfree won't take your advice."

"Thank God," replied he, "I dont want for business or spirits either, having the best of both for many miles round! And as for the

Squire, I speak for his good more than my own."

"I am inclined to believe you," said I; "but we don't know ourselves, Mr. Chine."

"To be sure we don't, Sir," replied he; "no more than the beasts we kills. But as to being happy, I have good health, a good business, and a good wife; I owe no man a farthing; and don't wish to hurt man or beast."

"Except when you cut the throat of the last," said I.

The jolly butcher rather grinned at being, as he said, so taken in; but recovering himself, answered, "O! as to that, that's all in the way of trade; and whatever's in the way of trade, you know, is fair."

Could I have suspected my friend of Shakspeare, I should have supposed he was thinking of Falstaff. This, and other parts of our conversation so amused me, that I was really sorry when, pointing to a pleasant house at a distance, at the end of a long hollow way, he said he had to go there for orders; and a round trot, well known to butchers' horses, soon carried him out of sight."

I was once more alone; and the remaining mile to Speenham I spent the more pleasantly for it, as those who are accustomed to travel alone

and are fond of solitary reflection, can easily understand. My thoughts, in fact, wandered through different parts of my life, comparing them with my present pursuit; and I was in such good humour with what I had lately seen, that I had no reason to regret what I had left. How much better, thought I, is this than flirting with a coquette in a ball-room, or a politician at St. Stephens!"

As I approached Speenham, the solitude of my ride was at an end. The open down road had closed into lanes, gay with hawthorn hedges in full blossom, and enlivened still more by birds in full chorus.

Waggons, fragrant with luscious green food—denoting peace and plenty—were moving from field to farm; and numerous market-people from Newbury, ruddy with health, and joyous at having disposed of their produce, crowded the way. Some of them were singing; and though I could not say much for their voices, and still less for their skill, all was Nature in her merriest mood, and consequently there was no want of happiness. I almost wished for Bullcock and Counsellor Snarl, to take a lesson from them; but my experience, young as it was, told me how totally incorrigible is the demon of discontent. I recollected that the sight of the happiness of our

first parents in Paradise made the devil turn aside for envy, and eye them askance; so I checked that wish.

The collective happiness, however, which I thus witnessed, did not put me in better humour with the wise visionaries who would risk everything for a change. I was more in love with Nature, and more desirous of investigating her, than ever, particularly under her least disguised appearance; which I began to agree with Willoughby in thinking, was more likely to be found in lower than higher life.

SECTION VIII.

A CONTRAST.

“The rich,
That have abundance and enjoy it not.”

2 HENRY IV.

“Poor and content is rich and rich enough.”

OTHELLO.

IN this disposition of mind I rode up to my comfortable inn, where I was received with the usual welcome of ostlers and waiters, with their pleased faces, and should have been so by the landlady, had she not been too fat to make her way easily through her bar door. “Our hostess, therefore, kept her state;” but I lost nothing by being received by her deputy, the head waiter; whom certainly no superfluous flesh prevented from welcoming me with all possible alacrity.

Locomotion, indeed, and power of speech, were his characteristics. He seemed to be without a capability to stand still; his face expressed all

the varieties of a waiter's civility ; he had " nods and becks and wreathed smiles," and yet there was so much hilarity and nature in them, that they appeared anything but deceitful. In short, he was *bon enfant*, and showed a great promise of happiness in his composition ; and, as such, I hoped to make favourable mention of him in my Journal. On asking, I found Willoughby was waiting for me up-stairs, and I told this new acquaintance to lead the way.

On the landing-place, however, we were blocked up for full two minutes, by an exceeding large gentleman, quite large enough in himself to stop the way ; but the *embarras* was increased by a servant, almost as big as himself, helping his master, whose legs by no means seemed a match for the body they were intended to support. We waited till we saw him led into a room next to that in which I found Willoughby ; my first compliments to whom were much interrupted by some violent ejaculations of fatigue, and fits of gaping and stretching, issuing palpably from the great person who had preceded me up-stairs. Having asked Willoughby if he knew who this uneasy gentleman was, he said " No," but there was one close at hand who, he was sure, would resolve me in a moment, and was himself an amusing character, quite in my way.

“ You must mean the waiter,” said I, who had already caught my observation.

“ The same,” answered he, “ and you must know he is a sort of friend, and, indeed, favourite of mine ; for not only I believe he is a very honest fellow, and certainly a happy one ; but there is nothing he does not know, or pretend to know. To try him once, I asked him if it would rain. ‘ Don’t know, Sir,’ said he, ‘ but let you know directly.’ Depend upon it he will give you chapter and verse for your new comer ; especially if he is a Nobleman.”

“ How so ?” I asked.

“ Why, he one day told me he knew all the carriages that stopped at their house, by the arms. I asked what were mine. ‘ O ! lord, Sir,’ he answered me, ‘ there you must excuse me ; I know nothing under a Lord.’ He then asked me some questions in blazonry, which he said he could not understand, particularly about the colours ; and when I tried to explain them, I found it impossible to fix his attention, for he said it was just like learning Latin—so many things to remember. However, the fellow has mother-wit enough, and I dare say he will find out the object of your inquiry, if he has not done so already.”

So saying, he rang the bell, and the waiter

threw himself headlong into the room, as described. Had he said, 'Anon, anon, Sir,' I should have thought he had been Francis: however, he asked our pleasure.

"We wish to know," said Willoughby, "who the fat gentleman is in the next room, who has been gaping so ever since he arrived?"

"I have just asked his man, Sir," said the waiter, "who showed me his direction at large on his portmanteau, which was, 'Edward Yawn, Esq., of Yawn Hall, near Yawn Town;,' so, with so many yawns," added the waiter, "I suppose we shall soon have him asleep."

"We don't want your wit," said Willoughby, "but only your information."

"Ay! that's always the way with you gentlemen," replied the waiter, whose real name was Thomas Tancred, but which was familiarized by the gentlemen he knew, (for he said he allowed it to nobody else,) into Tom Tankard, or, as some chose to alter it, into Quicksilver Tom. "That's always the way with you gentlemen; you won't let a poor man have a joke when he has got it; and yet, perhaps, it is as good as some of the gentlemen's themselves. I am sure it is the chief thing I have to live upon, barring the victuals in the house."

“ What !” said Willoughby, “ you have nothing but your good spirits to feed and clothe you ?”

“ I don’t know exactly what your honour means by good spirits,” replied Tom ; “ but if you mean good brandy, that’s the only spirits I touch, and right good it is in this house. I suppose I am to bring your Honour up a tumbler and water to-night, as usual ?”

Here the bell began ringing violently from Mr. Yawn’s room, and Quicksilver Tom made his exit in a hop, step, and a jump ; saying he should get anger if he kept the gentleman waiting.

“ A curious fellow,” said I.

“ You may set him down on the right side of your book,” observed Willoughby.

“ I have no doubt,” said I ; “ and could we see them together, he would make an admirable contrast to Edward Yawn, of Yawn Hall, near Yawn town, Esq.”

“ And yet,” observed Willoughby, “ that whole family of Yawn, I have been told, is exceedingly rich, and spreads all over the island, while this poor fellow, who is always on the *qui vive*, (with better spirits than brandy,) has not at this moment a tester in his pocket ; for I saw him empty it half an hour ago of the little that was in it, in favour of a tattered soldier and his wife and

children, who were passing to their parish, half dead with fatigue."

Our conversation about our neighbour, however, was stopped, by finding from what passed in the next room, that every word could be heard by him. The two rooms were, in fact, but one, divided, as the custom often is at inns, by a thin, movable partition. He was quarrelling with his dinner, because there were no mushrooms; and quarrelling with his man for telling him they were bad for him, and reminding him that he had already exceeded the quantity of wine allowed by his physician. This he denied, for rather an astute reason. The wine, he declared, was corked, though he had not remarked it till he had drunk a full pint: and the doctor had not certainly intended him to drink corked wine; he therefore ordered another bottle. This cheating of the devil for a little while kept him quiet; when his man, who seemed to have all the authority of a nurse, as well as the privileges of an old servant, proposed to take the wine away, and bring him coffee.

"I am certainly a most unfortunate man," said Mr. Yawn. "This is the only moment of the day in which I am anything like comfortable, and yet I am never allowed to enjoy it. Take away your coffee: it is a bore."

"The landlord," said his valet, "has sent you the county paper to amuse you."

"Take that away, too; a county paper *must* be a bore."

"Would you like to have an early tea," said the man, "before you go to bed?"

"No! tea is a bore; and even bed is a bore, for I get no sleep; in short, everything is a bore."

A turret clock now struck.

"Well," said Mr. Yawn, "there's some comfort. It is eight o'clock, and in two hours this horrible day will be over."

The valet, with some hesitation, told him he had miscounted, for it was only seven.

"Infernal!" sighed Mr. Yawn; "but, indeed, everything conspires to plague me.—What in the world is to be done till then?"

"There is a card-room in the house to-night," said the attendant.

"I hate cards," said the master.

"The landlord has some nice books," observed the other.

"Not one that I can read, I'll answer for it," replied Mr. Yawn. "Do you know what they are?"

"There is the 'Campaigns of the Duke of Wellington.'"

“ I am tired of the Duke of Wellington. I had enough of him in every town on the Continent, and now we have him still here. He is worse than Nelson.”

“ There are some of Sir Walter Scott’s novels.”

“ I have thumbed them all over.”

“ Lord Byron.”

“ Worse and worse !”

“ Some political pamphlets.”

“ I have forsworn politics, and all pamphlets I know to be lies.”

“ There are French memoirs.”

“ Greater lies than the other.”

“ ‘ The Good Consequences of a Reform Bill.’ ”

“ The greatest lie of all.”

And Yawn, true to his name, then began a fit of yawning, so loud, and of such long duration, that it communicated itself to us, who were ensconced behind the wainscot. Ours, however, ended in laughter, but our poor neighbour’s continued till, luckily for himself and servant, he fell asleep, and did not wake till it was time to go to bed.

“ Good heavens ! what a sad case this of Mr. Yawn’s,” said Willoughby, as we sat down to a light supper. “ Why, Tom Tankard, here, is worth a bag of gold in comparison, though he has not sixpence in his pocket.”

Tom instinctively put his hand into his pocket ; then, drawing it out, he exclaimed with emphasis, " No ! that I have not : but my heart is light though my breeches are thin."

" What would you take," said Willoughby, " to exchange lots with Mr. Yawn?"

" I would not for all his fortune," said Tom ; " and yet they say he has five thousand a-year. His man must have a fine time of it. Yet he says his master is very good, when he knows what to do with himself or his money."

" Then you are never melancholy," said I, " Mr. Tankard?"

Tom made me a low bow for calling him Mister, and answered, " Lord ! Sir, us waiters have not time ; for if we do get dull for a minute in the dead time of the year, the bell rings often enough even then ; and what with helping the maids, and mistress's scolding, we don't go to sleep."

" So, you help the maids, Tom," said Willoughby.

" To be sure, Sir," answered Tom. " Aren't we told to do so every Sunday, at church?"

" I did not know you were told to help the maids," cried Willoughby.

" I beg pardon," said Tom, a little put out ; " I mean, we are told to help one another, so

I always carry up Molly Chambermaid's heavy pitchers for her, when I have nothing else to do."

"And what does she do for you in return?"

"Gives me a kind look, which is pay enough."

"Excellent," said I, when Tom had shut the door. "I am not surprised at your liking this light-hearted fellow, and meet it is I put him down in my tablets, on the opposite side to poor Yawn; though the one has nothing but his good spirits, and the other five thousand a-year."

Tom coming back again, in his usual hurry, for something he had left, Willoughby asked him if he knew what was the matter with Mr. Yawn.

"Can't say, Sir, nor his man either, whom I asked; but he said the doctors themselves could not tell, though they took guineas upon guineas from him wherever he went, till they were ashamed to take any more, so they sent him to Garmany, and other outlandish places, where he was boiled almost to death in the baths; but it did him no good, so he is now going to Bath to be boiled over again."

"I think I could tell what is the matter with him," observed Willoughby.

"O, lord! Sir," said Tom, "I should like to know."

"Why, there is a disease very prevalent in

England, though you don't seem to know anything about it. Did you ever hear of ennui, or, as perhaps it is best to call it, the spleen?"

"Ah! yes, Sir. I believe I have heard talk of it. Isn't it a distemper that attacks gentlemen and ladies, and lets poor people alone?"

"You have hit it exactly," said Willoughby.

"But, then, what is it?" continued Tom.

"The having more money than we know what to do with," answered Willoughby.

"I should be a long while before I got the distemper," rejoined Tankard. "The very pigeons on the house-tops, and the sparrows in the hedges, might give one a lesson. I'll warrant they never have the spleen."

"Nor you either, Tom," said Willoughby, familiarly.

Tom bowed, then added, "But what would your Honour advise for this poor gentleman?"

"Flog him at the cart's tail," said Willoughby.

"Lord! Sir, you can't be in earnest; but you are always making your games on us. Yet that is better than many of the stiff Bath folks and their yellow faces, who have not a word to throw at a dog. Shall I order your Honour's night-cap and Molly? It's almost time."

So saying, he rattled out of the room without waiting for an answer.

“Excellent, again,” I said; “this fellow will never die of the spleen; his description of which deserves to be recorded in the next Encyclopedia, to say nothing of your cure for it.”

SECTION IX.

A LETTER.

“ Devouring pestilence hangs in our air,
And thou art flying to a fresher clime.
Think not the king did banish thee,
But thou the king.”

RICHARD II.

“ Miserable England !
I prophesy the fearfull'st time to thee,
That ever wretched age hath look'd upon.”

RICHARD III.

THE next morning brought me a letter from Etheredge, in answer to mine from Easington. It contained an important communication respecting no less a person than our friend Gorewell, who, more than ever angry at the political and moral offences of his countrymen, had resolved to expatriate himself, and renounce the very name of Englishman. He therefore sought happiness abroad; and it was in vain that Etheredge endeavoured to turn him from this experiment, by softening, as well as he could, the

crimes and follies of the land, and setting before him the great chance of his finding himself worse off in his voluntary exile. It was in vain even that Lady Isabel joined her husband in endeavouring to deter him from his project. He was gallant enough, however, to say, "Madam, if there was another Lady Isabel in England I would stay at home."

Etheredge said he was puzzled how to reply; for he really thought there was no such other to be found; and his wife was so amazed at the compliment of the Cynic, that she was equally embarrassed. Gorewell therefore had it all his own way. He breakfasted with them the morning of his departure, and their last conversation was as characteristic as ever of this strong-minded, though perhaps mistaken man.

"*Ubi bene, ibi patria*," said Gorewell, as he prepared to get into his chaise, and kissed his hand with a determined air, denoting that he had fully made up his mind as to his own country, whatever might be his expectations from any other.

"That is but a selfish maxim, after all," observed Etheredge.

"It was Bolingbroke's," replied he, "and what served him will surely serve me."

"I should be sorry if it did," said Etheredge,

“ for, if so, we may expect you to bear arms and fight, or take office and plot, against Old England, and all in it you hold dear.”

“ I have lost all in it that I held dear, except yourselves,” replied Gorewell ; “ and as for the remainder, what have I ever met with from them, that I should prize them more even than the enemies you suppose me ready to join ? Then, if you come to the public character of England, its high-minded nobles, its wise rulers, its firm defenders, its virtuous patriots ! why speak of them ? Sir Archy M’Sarcasm was right in saying they were all rum-puncheons and sugar-hogs-heads. In a word, I have watched the State, and the State has shown itself not worth watching.”

“ Quite a Coriolanus !” said Etheredge, endeavouring to rally him.

“ Not so, I assure you,” returned he ; “ for had I been that gallant person, not even the tears of a mother or a wife should have prevented me from what ‘ never comes too late ’—a great revenge ! Mind, however, I am too little adventurous to be a Coriolanus, though disgusted enough to be Scipio, and will leave to be engraven on my tomb, ‘ Dishonoured country ! my bones shall not rest among you.’ ”

“ And whom do you blame for all this ?” inquired Etheredge.

“Not the professed pirates; not the upstart demagogues; not the undisguised rascals; for they at least are open, and though they put a pistol to your head, tell you what they want. It is the pampered and cowardly hypocrites I mean, who used to sell themselves to the Crown, and now sell themselves to the people, because they think the people likely to be strongest. It is these who have betrayed us, to save themselves. But, though plunged to the chin in disgrace, they are only like the horse and the man in the fable. I only hope the man will ride them hard enough.”

Etheredge in vain told him they would rally, in time to avert this catastrophe.

Gorewell gave him another fable. “There was a lion once, you know, a very great fool, who, to secure his happiness, and remove all cause of fear of him, submitted to have his claws cut off; and he was properly knocked on the head for his pains.—Such are the empirics who quelled us with the belief that they were honest; such the gulls who did, and do support them, thinking that well-meaning will be their protection. But this shallow foresight will not avail them. The time approaches, when the Old England you just mentioned, will be New England; and when tailors, political quacks, and bankrupt lawyers will govern, because gentlemen are un-

worthy or afraid of doing so. Even the king (if he is permitted), will be forced to seek his own in Germany, which the changed, rascally, and still pretending John Bull refuses him here. In short, the political and moral atmosphere of England is as bad for the health of the mind, as its fogs for the body. Shall I not leave it?"

"And whither will you go?" said Etheredge. "To America, which you once so vituperated?"

"I might do worse," returned he; "for even Jonathan has grown more honest, and a much better gentleman, than his father."

"As he had now intrenched himself behind the door of his post-chaise," adds Etheredge, "I could not push the argument any farther, had I been inclined to it; but knowing the determination of the man when he thought himself right, as he did here, I saw him drive off, though with regret. His many virtues made us sorry to lose him; and moreover, I was not so comfortably sure as I wished to be, that he was wrong."

"Isabel is much edified by your tour, and hopes you will extend it to the Continent, where she says she so far agrees with Gorewell, as to allow there is greater happiness among the people, than in our boasted land of liberty and discontent. Your visit to Easington Hall was more than amusing. I wish there were more Heart-

frees among us. Your Willoughby, too, I like mightily."

Such was the graphic account of a man made for better things, whom it was a pity to think was lost to his country, which it would have been better for him to have endeavoured to save, than abandon. But this proceeded not from cowardice, or indifference; for could his life have saved England from the danger he apprehended, he would have laid it down for her. His real incentive was indignation, partly, no doubt, occasioned by his own wrongs, mainly at the meanness to which he saw our great ones stoop. And here it will, perhaps, be convenient if I interrupt the immediate course of my narrative, to come at once to a continuation of the subject of Gorewell, although it occurred at a more distant epoch of time.

SECTION X.

A VOLUNTARY EXILE.

“ All places that the eye of Heaven visits,
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.”

RICHARD II.

MY own wishes, and Etheredge and Lady Isabel's advice, had sent me abroad, and to that particular region which they both of them had so much cause to love. They told me that I should there find much food for observation ; and in particular, for the proof, where there is natural and constitutional contentedness, how little either of wealth, or equality, is necessary to make a people happy. In short, among other parts of Germany, I visited Wiesbaden, which I would not again mention after all that has been said of it in a former part of these Memoirs, but for an incident which much excited me.

My lodgings faced the south, and looked upon a cheerful Boulevard, between a double row of sycamores, where it was the custom for the high

and low of the place, men, women, and children, to walk either on business, or for pleasure ; so that there was no want of movement at any time of the day. As this was what I liked, I was often at my window to behold the passing world, which, in truth, seemed full of quiet cheerfulness and good-nature—the good-nature of Germany.

The constancy with which a particular man at particular hours paced this walk, and the generally pleased attention he seemed to give to all about him, would alone have engaged me ; but he also seemed no common personage with all the animated beings, of whatever kind or degree, that passed or repassed him. Not only the upper orders all saluted him, but the lower of both sexes, going to or from market with their baskets, or water-tubs on their heads, greeted him with smiles and “Guten Tag’s.” Little children danced and sung around, and made him laugh ; the dogs capered and caressed ; and even cats and kittens gambolled about him. All seemed to know him ; and he had a word or a nod for every one, whether of human or brute kind. He had generally, also, corn in his pocket, with which he enticed the neighbouring pigeons, who flew away as soon as the stock was exhausted. Upon one of these occasions, he said to my landlord, who related it to me :—“The rascals ! they are

just like the rest of the world." Be that as it may; for one or two hours of the day, he was pleased to while away the time with these very simple occupations, the frequent repetition of which, one would have thought, would have made them insipid: but it did not.

He was generally so enveloped in the great military cloak of the country, that for the first few days I could not make him out, though from his gait and height, I could not help thinking it was Gorewell. If I doubted, it was because of an alacrity in his movements, which I had not remembered when in England, where his pace was rather solemn and slow. Resolving, however, to ascertain it, I followed him one day through the beautiful varieties of the road to Sonnenberg.

The extreme antiquity of the ruins of this spot can never but fill the mind with a thousand mixed, and for the most part, solemn reflections. The tower was still ponderous with masonry, and with the walls and gate-way (now fast approaching to absolute ruin), bespoke an existence of at least a thousand years. The municipality of Wiesbaden, under the influence of their good Duke (seemingly, from all accounts of him, the good Duke of the forest of Arden), had placed benches, at short intervals, all along the road; some just in the bend of the rustling

brooks that line the way, fringed with copse-wood, which often screens passengers from the view of one another.

On one of these benches Gorewell (for I now saw it was he), reclined in meditation deep, but not silent, and I checked my pace to watch him. Though at first indistinct, it was plain he was moralizing upon times past; for I clearly caught the words of Touchstone;—between whom and himself there was this other resemblance, that each had “laid him down and basked him in the sun.” Like Touchstone, too, “he drew a dial from his poke,” and with something like a sigh, repeated—

“Thus we may see how the world wags;
’Tis but an hour ago since it was nine,
And after one hour more ’twill be eleven:
And so from hour to hour we ripe and ripe,
And then from hour to hour we rot and rot,
And thereby hangs a tale.”

At this he got up, and seemed preparing to walk, when fearing to lose him, I showed myself, and we shook hands with mutual pleasure. As I knew he was aware of my being acquainted with all his marked opinions of his own country, and of the feelings which had driven him into voluntary exile, I pointed to the ruined walls and arches that surrounded us, and did not scruple

to say, that I had found him like Marius sitting in the ruins of Carthage.

“Marius,” said he, “was so horrible a villain, and such a complete specimen of what relentless havoc may be made by the ambition of an advocate of the people, that I neither feel flattered nor honoured by being compared to him.”

This reply might have deterred me from pursuing the conversation farther; but I went on to say, I meant any thing but to compare him to Marius, either in his good or evil fortune; “but I own,” I said, “I thought of your opinions of poor England, when I saw you pondering over the ruins of Sonnenberg.”

“What you say,” returned he, “may be true; but the ruin of England, or rather of her Constitution and character, is not so advanced as that of this massive castle. Nevertheless, it seems such an emblem of the destruction that may await her, and sink the strength of a thousand years to nothing, that I look at it with an awful, because a prophetic eye. With these associations, therefore, there is a fascination about it, which I cannot resist; and even were it without the delightful landscapes through which we approach it, it would be, as it is, ‘my daily walk, my ancient neighbourhood.’”

“ And yet,” returned I, “ when I also saw you, as I have for several mornings, without knowing you, interested and pleased with things so inferior, and which must have once appeared the most absolute trifles in your passage through life, I did not think that to contemplate ruins would be such a favourite object with you.”

“ To what do you allude ?” said he, with surprise.

“ To the pleasure you seemed to take in objects so little worthy one of a mind like your’s : the mere peasantry, the noisy children, and even the gambols of common domestic animals, dogs and cats, who all seemed to frolic about you, as if you had been Robinson Crusoe.”

“ They are all, at least the brute part of them,” replied he, “ honest in their way ; and the human creatures too are honester, and a great deal more contented and good-natured, than those I have left, without half so much reason for it. But if this were not so, you surely are not to learn the nature of a great and absorbing interest, or, as perhaps you may call it, a great disgust. Paradoxical as it may appear, the mind which will not stoop from its higher emotions with a view to consolation, or forget its interests in a cowardly oblivion, will yet find something like diversion, and certainly relaxation, in neutral

and simpler objects : and the more simple, or, if you please, trifling they are, the more compatible they are with the great absorption that fills the soul."

" Why is that ?" said I.

" I cannot tell," he answered, " except, perhaps, that the soul, under strong impressions, has not room in it for things of a higher order. It was this, I am convinced, that Shakspeare knew, when he made Hamlet, though under a suffering which drove him almost to madness, halt sometimes in his great pursuit, and unbend even to playfulness, in moralizing with a gravedigger. But still more, on the other hand, can the mind gather almost interest from what appears trifling, when it has thoroughly discharged from itself (as is the case with me) all that used to occupy it, however great the object or person."

" You have considered this matter, I see, to the bottom," I replied ; " but may I ask the effect of all this on the object which led you to leave your country ; and, in particular, if I may take the liberty, whether you have found the cure or relief you promised yourself ?"

" The cure, perhaps not," he replied ; " the relief, in a great measure. My object was, if possible, to obtain the '*jucunda oblivia vitæ* ;'

and that could not be, where everything I saw, everything I heard, and everything I expected to see and hear, was pregnant with what added to anxiety for the future, instead of forgetfulness of the past. Friends severed; families divided; knaves triumphant; honest men defenceless; and hypocrites successful, though renegadoes to all their former professions, many of them to the whole tenour of their former lives;—men,

‘ Who, for their bellies’ sake,
Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold.’

I say, it was impossible to breathe in so ‘ foul and pestilent a congregation of vapours,’ and not sink for want of fresher air. To palliate or tamper with the disease was out of the question; the very blood of England, and that some of the noblest, seemed cankered. For what appeared the chief of all that was high and lofty in the higher orders of the state; and all, or at least the majority, of what was once the healthiest part of it, the middle classes; were seized and corroded with the same phrenzy, or the same cowardice. They abandoned their posts;—some (the honest) from perversion of intellect; some from the rankest treason; some from the most despicable love of pelf. A stand was, indeed, made by a gallant band; but the headlong worshippers

of Baal and of pelf overpowered them. O ! when I think what gallantry, what firmness, what real patriotism have been overthrown, and by what means, can I do otherwise than remember the fearful portent that preceded the murder, not of a kingdom, indeed, but a king ?

‘ An eagle towering in his pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk’d at and kill’d.’

In short, I find the once gallant England, what she was once in ridicule called, a nation *boutiquière*. I looked, I own, for better things at one period, but was forced by the event to exclaim,

‘ He that does not follow England now,
Let him go hence, and with his cap in hand,
Like a base pander, hold the chamber door,
Whilst by a slave, no gentler than a dog,
His fairest daughter is contaminated *.’ ”

Here Gorewell ceased, and I own this fervour communicated itself to me. I could hardly wonder at the step which this sensitive man had forced himself to take. But impelled by interest about him, as well as curiosity, I again asked him what remedy he had found by coming abroad ?

He answered quickly, “ More perhaps than you think. In the first place, I get rid of associations which for ever shed cloud, and mist, and gloom around me. I am now surrounded with

* Henry V.

new scenes, new manners, and a new people, who, though they may be less polished, are more natural, and gain immensely by a comparison with those I have left. I breathe, too, in an air quite as pregnant with real freedom, and with infinitely more real content than the most flourishing times of boasted England ever knew. The very constitution here is now as free, and the government far more paternal, because unmixed with mob rule. The reason of this is plain; the reign of lie, in order to create tumult, with a view to control the sovereign, is unknown. Every man is free, and knows he is uninjured, and has the modesty therefore, as well as the sense, to believe, and avow his belief of what he knows. The villainous machinator, the political pander, and the hypocritical pretender, are therefore alike powerless. So much for the public; and as for the domestic character of the people, their uncommon good-nature and hilarity; their industry, good order, and cheerfulness, unassailed and unassailable by demagogues, would soften an asperity worse than mine. In a word, my exile has been no exile to me; I have caught the spirit of those that surround me; dishonesty, if there be any, is here only known to shops, and not to cabinets, and I live unmolested by fear or indignation. You must not, therefore, be surprised if,

having taken my leave of great men and great things, knowing how fallacious both are, I feel my spirit dilate with a pleasure quite enough to occupy it, in simpler, nay, the smallest objects. Hence the laughing eye of a child, the capers of a dog, and even the frisking of a kid, but much more these surrounding waterfalls, and sun-cloathed banks, with all the train of reflections on the goodness of Nature which they inspire, have an interest for me now which I never felt before."

I deferred to all this with respect: he assured me he was happy, and I believed him.

He then invited me to walk home with him to his lodging, which was picturesque, and, certainly, characteristic. It was in the very midst of the castle of Sonnenberg, and had been the residence of some *modern* lord of it two or three hundred years ago; for it was in the style of a château of Lewis XIII., or our James. Massive stone steps, now dangerously broken, and overrun with nettles, led up into a terrace, which, with the steps, were, or had been protected by the swelling banisters of a ponderous balustrade, all of stone, but broken and green with moss. A door, strong with iron studs, between broad scrolled architraves, originally rich, and surmounted with the arms, coronets, and crests of Nassau, led into

a hall, which seemed not to have known paint for at least a century. From this, however, we entered an apartment of a different aspect, having been made comfortable, and almost gay, by our exiled friend; and had not what was called a garden exhibited the most dreary signs of abandonment and neglect, the prospect from without might have been cheerful.

“But all was of a piece,” said Gorewell, when I observed upon it, “with the ruins that surrounded it, and the state of my own thoughts, denoting *former* strength, *former* happiness, and *present* desolation.”

I blamed my friend for the choice he had made of a retreat; but he justified it by saying, it soothed rather than aggravated his actual frame of mind. I stayed an hour, and left him with no very cheerful reflections of my own.

How he came to select Wiesbaden for his refuge, was the subject of another conversation.

True to his theory, that the mind, while under some great feeling, can unbend itself with pleasure in the contemplation of the simplest objects, I found him very early one morning pacing the fruit and green market, which I learned was his usual custom.

“It is extraordinary,” said he, “after the life I have led, and the people I have known,—courts

and grandees, great adventurers, men of learning and genius, statesmen and warriors,—how age, and the succumbing of ambition, will render such a scene as this interesting to me ! Yet it is so. I am amused, pleased, and even plunged in thought by the sight. You see Nature in her true colours in this moving picture.”

Still I could not help expressing my wonder, how a man of so active a mind could dispose of his time, aloof from his country, and all old interests. We had now left the market once more for the Sonenberg road, and I went on. “ For as you cannot always be occupied with trifles, I should tremble for your hours.”

“ Make yourself easy,” said he ; “ for the trifles we have talked of derive most of their power to amuse from their being a relaxation from more serious employments.”

Upon my expressing surprise as to what they were, he told me he had so resumed his habits of reading, that the day was too short for him. The great object of his pursuit was, however, not politics, as I thought, but the philosophy of man, under all his aspects and in all his states. This, he said, was inexhaustible, and only increased in interest the longer it was pursued.

“ It will last,” said he, “ the longest life, and far exceed mine. The ‘ Decline and Fall’ which

made Lausanne so happy to Gibbon, was nothing to it ; and these walks, this air, this exercise, and the trifles you suppose my chief or only occupation, are, in fact, no more than the unbending of a mind full fraught with reflection, though not on what you suppose. It is by this I hope to recover from a sourness of temper which, though hasty, and easily roused, is, I trust, not malevolent. When I first came here, however, I own I was disappointed, for I came too late. The season was over ; the streets were silent and sad ; and the beauty of the place, and the thought of what it was *intended* for, only made me more melancholy. All this, however, went off. The effect had been more from wrong expectations, than because I was unfit to be alone. On the contrary, my humour and recollections were more soothed than they could have been in a crowd. Solitary elegance, is still elegance ; and if it was only for the perfect beauty of the environs, inviting to all the contemplations that are most pleasing to the mind, Wiesbaden would ever be a favourite sojourn for me.

“ A devotee of retirement might be laughed at for supposing such a place favourable to his disposition. This is a mistake. Retirement neither is, nor requires, a desert. What it is that we retire from, is the whole question. We are at

this moment, you see, in a romantic seclusion of shrubs and flowers, enveloped in trees, which wholly banish the town from sight. Yet it is, perhaps, its very proximity to the town, which, from contrast, forms its charm. Its sequestered air, its verdure, and its silence, tell me I am almost out of the world ; but the regular return of busy sounds, too near to be not understood, too distant to be unpleasing, assure me I am in it. This is as it should be. I want seclusion as a promoter of thought, and forgetfulness of particular objects ; but I want not to desert, or be deserted ; which I should be if too far removed. In short, I love my species, though not my country ; and, being now a complete citizen of the world, I court, rather than fly from, its comforts and its protection.”

Here our conversation ended ; and, indeed, seeing him so fixed, I thought it booted little to continue a vain endeavour to change him. But as I was about to return home, I asked him if he had any commands to the Etheredges, and if I could give them no hope of their ever seeing him again. His reply was memorable :—

“ Tell Lady Isabel how much I thank her for sending me to this delightful place, of which she is still remembered as the grace and ornament, as well as wherever else she has been ;

and tell them both that I will return to England when its leading nobles shall be either afraid, or ashamed, to tell the people to resist the laws which make those nobles what they are."

These memorable words closed my intercourse with this extraordinary man; who still pursues the life he has chosen; and whom, with all his mortifications, from the mode in which he consoles himself, and his absorption in the most important inquiries, which he may one day give to the world, I may fairly now rank amongst the happy.

My search after happiness even here, therefore, was successful, and so I am proud to record it.

SECTION XI.

“ Like a school broke up,
Each hurries towards his home and hiding-place.”
2nd Part HENRY IV.

I LITTLE thought that Gorewell would have detained me so long from pursuing the road to Bath,—to which I now return ; but my changed notions of that remarkable and decided character, when divested of its cynicism, as it was at Wiesbaden, gave me an interest about him which I could not quit. In effect, what he said of himself was true. He loved his species, though he was out of humour with England ; and his benevolence was quite equal to his height of mind. He had not, perhaps, the repose of Heartfree, in his reasoning upon the events of the world ; nor had he Heartfree’s amusing resource in country pleasures ; but he had equal independence, and equal excellence of heart.

Proceed we now to other game ; and as I now

had Willoughby for a brother sportsman, though only for a few miles, I hoped to be gratified. From his sojourn of a fortnight at Speenham, and his indefatigable love of wandering, the whole country for twenty miles round was known to him; and we could scarcely pass a house that he did not make me acquainted with the name, character, and perhaps the history of the owner.

On one occasion, we observed a number of men, at least forty, with each what I thought a hop-pole on his shoulder, manœuvring at the command of a hale, middle-aged looking gentleman. They were now standing in double files with their poles erect, then shouldering them again, and marching to another part of the field, where they pitched the poles in the same sort of double line. I could not help expressing my surprise. The hale-looking gentleman that commanded, and rode a small pony, was remarkably active in forming his lines, and the distances of his men; so that, in fact, I took him for an officer in the Berks militia, playing at soldiers, such as I had sometimes seen in the old Forbury, at Reading. But I could not account for the poles, each of which had large roots hanging at one end.

Willoughby laughing at my wonder, explained by saying this was no militia captain, but a very

worthy woolstapler of Newbury, who, having made a fortune, and purchased the staring house we saw in the field, was resolved to fit it with an avenue, only was not determined under which aspect it would look best ; and as he could not wait the growth of low plants, he had purchased a hundred or two, twenty feet high, which he was then moving about in order to observe their effect in different spots.

As Willoughby was acquainted with him, we entered his domain, and were welcomed with courtesies by the master, who was fresh as a rose, and the picture of happiness. We congratulated him upon the great interest he seemed to take in his employment, which we begged not to interrupt.

Why, yes, he said, he had never been more busy, even at a wool-fair ; and though that put money in his pocket instead of taking it out, the pleasure his present occupation gave him was worth all the packs in his warehouse :—" and that," added he, " is not a little."

After he had submitted his design to us respecting the avenue, which of course we approved, we took leave of the happy woolstapler, to whom we wished all success, and whom the lords and gentlemen I had left in London, strug-

gling for power, and the ladies struggling for conquest, might, on the score of content, perchance have envied.

Presently, sounds, or, as I might rather say, shouts of joy and merriment greeted our ears. They proceeded from the inner side of an old wall, overhung with rambling ash-trees, astride which, and the coping of the wall, (by no means the better for it,) some half-dozen of young urchins, not very silent, were sitting at gaze on the road as we passed by; yet, though all sitting, they were all in motion, as if bestriding a hard-trotting horse, instead of an old wall; and their glee was perfect. Suddenly an old pie-woman with her basket, entering a gate close at hand, the boys leaped down, and joined a race of twenty others, who should get first to the Hesperian fruit.

“It is a school,” said Willoughby, “and it is twelve o’clock.”

“The happiest time of a boy’s life,” said I.

“Perhaps of a man’s too,” observed Willoughby, with seriousness; “yet I ought not to moralize, for I have been a boy all my days.”

“And happier than these,” said I, “because not afraid of flogging.”

“I would willingly compound for that,” replied he, “to have the total exemption from all other

care, and the immensurable treasure of hope, unalloyed by anything else, which are the characteristics of a boy's life."

"*Fortunatos sua si bona norint !*" said I ; " but they don't know it."

" That does not appear," he observed, " at least in those eager and merry groups,

' Who chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball.'"

" That is true," said I, " and I could gladly, on the spot, pursue all that has been so exquisitely said by our greatest lyric poet (of modern times, at least,) upon school-boy happiness and misery. It is always to me one of the most engaging subjects of all our ethical disquisitions."

" Much as I admire the composition," answered Willoughby who had, I know not why, dropped his merry mood, " I never quite liked the *morale* of that ode. The thought of human misery ought not certainly to be extinguished, but it comes soon enough to keep itself from being forgotten ; and I therefore do not love the poet for throwing cold water, as he does, upon all the glowing picture of happiness he has drawn, in the very moment when he has drawn it, and decked it, too, in its brightest colours."

" And yet," said I, " he is warm in his praises,

and does ample justice to this spring of our lives:—

‘ I feel the gales that from you blow,
A momentary bliss bestow,
As, waving from their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.’

You may remember, too, that—

‘ Gay hope was theirs, by fancy fed,
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast.’ ”

“ All that is true,” said Willoughby; “ and you have selected half-a-dozen lines of happiness out of as many scores of misery; and, what is worse, which he seems to have gone out of his way to search for and set before us. Why should these young beings, buxom with youth, and buoyant with spirits, as you see them, in what is truly called ‘ the sunshine of the breast,’ suddenly, and without call, have the cup dashed from their lips? You see them striving now with emulation; some perhaps with ambition, but an honest one. Why are they now to be told, *before their time*, that ambition

‘ Shall whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter scorn a sacrifice,
And grinning infamy?’

Still more, why are they *unnecessarily* to be warned of

‘Hard unkindness’ alter’d eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow?’

“I pass the sad catalogue of miseries he would make these boys look at, amid their innocent pastimes; and only wish he had recollected his own maxim, when he wrote so uncomfortably—

‘Yet, ah! why should they know their fate?
Since sorrow never comes too late.
No more—where ignorance is bliss,
’Tis folly to be wise!’

These considerations have often damped the pleasure I am otherwise, heart and soul, disposed to feel, whenever I see a play-field, and which make me wish those fine lines had never been written.”

“Yours, at least,” said I, “is the sunshine of the breast, and ought not to be disturbed. Meantime, forgetting prophecy till it be more necessary, let us rank this half hundred of boys where they ought to be,—high in the scale of the happy.”

SECTION XII.

“ Let him shun castles. Safer shall he be
Upon the sandy plain.”

2nd Part, HENRY VI.

IN this little fit of moralizing, we pricked on towards Marlborough, where the magnificent inn and gardens, Willoughby said, “ made him feel almost as proud as the proud Duke of Somerset, who built it for a mere lodging-house for himself in his way to town. How little,” continued Willoughby, “ did his Grace think he was building it for so graceless a fellow as I! But ‘ *sic transit gloria* ;’—such glory, at least, as the Duke’s was, who dealt largely in magnificence, if he did not in comfort.”

“ Have a care,” said I, “ that you do not fall into that gross but common error (I must not add, into the bad taste,) which leads people to believe, what perhaps they wish,—that because they have no magnificence themselves, others that have, have no comfort. I, at least, have

seen them so often combined, that I cannot help censuring that opinion."

"Leaving my vagabond notions to themselves," replied Willoughby, "we are now coming up to a person who will read us a lecture upon that subject; at least, though most extensively connected with rich and great, and welcome enough among them, from his attainments and cultivation, he is remarkable for almost studiously shunning them, from a taste, growing more and more upon him, for living alone. I have only lately got acquainted with him in one of my tours, and at first thought it proceeded from some disgust; but he is no Jaques, and certainly does not love melancholy better than laughing; but he says it is all sheer selfishness."

At these words we came up to the gentleman, who was walking his horse (a handsome one at all points) leisurely along, and to whom Willoughby introduced me, by the name of Mr. Blythfield. He had a countenance marked by the most palpable combination of shrewdness and good-nature I had ever seen; seemed much at his ease in a large drab-coloured riding-coat, slashed at the sleeves, in a fashion at least forty years old; had a ruddy cheek, and a manner which, though thoroughly affable, and anything but proud, seemed to indicate that he had been

chiefly used to the company of persons who looked up to him.

“ I suppose,” said Willoughby, “ you have been to pay your duty to your chief there (pointing to a Nobleman’s mansion with spreading wings;) and, I trust, you are in better humour with it than you were at your last annual visit, when you had so many amusing distresses.”

“ They were no amusement to me,” returned our new companion, “ and I regret that Lord Grandborough, who is really a worthy and enlightened man, should so give into our foolish manners, introduced by wealth, as to sacrifice so many comforts and independent hours as he might be master of, to the fashionable nothingness and annoyances in which he passes his time. He laughs at me, and calls me Cynic, because, being his near relation, I prefer my ‘ hollow tree’ to his ‘ tall house near Lincoln’s Inn.’ He certainly does the honours of his consanguinity exceedingly well; has neither pride nor vapours, (though I am afraid his Lady has both); and were his house better built and furnished——”

“ Better built and furnished!” cried Willoughby, “ this is rank treason, or at least blasphemy against all taste and virtue! Why, I went all over it the other day in a large company, who came from London on purpose; and I must say

no show-house ever deserved its reputation so well."

"It is a show-house, then!" said Mr. Blythfield.

"To be sure! and very well worth seeing."

"So much the better for you," continued Blythfield, "and the worse for my Lord. He was out, of course, when all this company came from London to see, not him, but his house?"

"He was at home," answered Willoughby, "and his Lady, too."

"Probably he had company?"

"I believe a great deal; for a number of ladies and gentlemen moved out of the Vandyck room when we came to it to admire the paintings."

"Pleasant life!" said Blythfield, turning to me.

"Why, that's a matter of taste," returned Willoughby. "Lord Grandborough is not obliged to show his house, unless he likes it."

"Exactly so: nor I, to be rummaged out of a Vandyck room, when I don't like it, and people I never heard of come from London to see me."

"It shows his good nature," said Willoughby.

"It shows his vanity," observed Blythfield.

"However, my noble cousin is an excellent person; does a great deal of good, and lives *en*

prince," said Willoughby. "We saw his table set out for dinner—and such a side-board of plate!"

"Comfortable again," cried Blythfield. "The whole company of inquisitives were there, I suppose?"

"Altogether," said Willoughby.

"And no doubt paid the housekeeper well?" continued Blythfield.

"I believe among us, several guineas."

"Perhaps, in the presence of my Lord?"

"I am not sure; but it might be, for we saw him several times."

"An admirable specimen of the domestic life of an English nobleman," concluded Blythfield.

I now ventured to join the conversation, by observing, that for so vast a building, it was much denuded of trees.

"And yet," said Blythfield, "it is famous for a park of twenty miles in circumference."

I looked about me with curiosity.

"You may well do that," said the man of comfort; "for though what I have told you is true, this famous park is five miles off, and separated by a bleak flat heath to that extent before you get at it. But what think you of the house?"

"It seems notable for vastness," I observed.

"And that is all you can say," he replied.

“Never was such a quarry of ill-arranged stone. Either of no order (which would be more bearable), or affecting something nobody knows what ; neither castle, nor house, nor abbey ; so built upon groynes as for the lower rooms to resemble a vast cellar, and even in summer, quite as chilly and damp. One reason, therefore, for my not visiting my cousin often is, that I always get the shivers, which it takes a week of my comfortable home to recover from.”

“And yet,” said Willoughby, “he has all the modern precautions for warming the largest house. I saw Moser’s machines in almost every room.”

“Which are very complicated, and always out of order,” he replied ; “and, moreover, as the dozen of lackeys he keeps (who never do anything with willingness, as if it would derogate from their master’s honour,) never see to the fires below, they let in volumes of cold air, instead of hot.”

When I questioned this, saying, “I knew many great people’s characters from the goodness of their servants,” he replied, “You shall hear. When I was last at Grandborough, it was September, and quite as cold, or colder than at Christmas ; but though we were all shrivelled, and my lady put on two shawls, it would have been treason to ask for a fire, because it was Septem-

ber: not to mention that a polished grate, of a hundred guineas value, would have been sullied. I therefore left the dining-parlour, and sought the steward's-room; hoping for a blaze; but they told me they never began fires till November. *N'importe*, thought I, I will find the kitchen, where, after such a dinner, I, no doubt, shall be roasted. I asked the way of two or three domestics, but they could not understand what I wanted, and walked off without noticing me; except one, who said, with a toss of her head, 'Sure a kitchen is not a fit place for a gentleman,' and walked off too. At last I found it, but full of smoke and dust, the fire being always raked out as soon as dinner was over. On my return, I was comforted with seeing the company walking in the marble gallery, admiring alabaster naked Apollos, which only made every thing colder; nor was I myself till I got to bed, which was not till one or two in the morning. And this is what Mr. Willoughby calls my *amusing* visit."

We laughed at this description, which made me eye the house still more.

"Is there no garden?" said I. "It seems a vast pile of walling, rising abruptly out of a plain."

"Like Stonehenge," observed Blythfield, laughing.

“ There is a garden, however, and a very good one, if that can be good where the expense is out of all proportion to the profit and pleasure of it. For you have to walk exactly a mile before you can see it, and it requires, at least, a thousand a year to keep it up ; so that, upon a moderate computation, a cabbage costs half a guinea, and a pine ten times that sum.”

“ There are, surely, flourishing shrubs,” said I, “ near the house ?”

“ There are many trellises intended for them,” returned Blythfield, “ and large ranks of orange-trees regularly brought out ; but both shrubs and orange-trees generally perish from the total want of shelter :—one reason more why I, who revel in a sheltered garden, am not ambitious of passing much time at my noble relation’s.”

“ Once a year contents you,” said Willoughby, “ notwithstanding his fortune.”

“ His fortune would not sway me one way or the other,” replied Blythfield ; “ for though he has ten times as much as I have, I am not one of those falsely proud fools, who think it high spirit to shun their superiors. I even love Lord Grandborough for many virtues, and could almost envy his fortune for the good he does with it. But there envy is at an end ; and as I prefer eating beef and mutton for my sustenance, to gold,

which has no sustenance in it, so I prefer the comfort of my warm and happy freedom, to the annoying mode of existence to which I am doomed at Grandborough."

Then turning to me, he said, "As you are going to Bath, you will pass my house on the road. You will see nothing superb; but, I trust, enjoyable. It is not merely that I am naturally a contented man, but that, in real comforts, which a king is without, I am happier than kings. They have pomp, and we will allow them taste and diamonds; but we cannot eat diamonds, neither will taste keep one warm. We will also give them all the refinements they wish; but my sheer selfish question is of personal, that is, of natural enjoyments. All that art can do for them they have. Witness Versailles. But what was Versailles? Could Versailles be a happy residence? Hence, I never saw a palace, however I may have admired it, but I rejoiced that I was not born to live in it. I think it was Charles III. of Spain, who, though he possessed Aranjuez as a retreat from Madrid, built up a small lodge a mile or two off, as a retreat from Aranjuez—a retreat from a retreat. This lets us into the real nature of the happiness of position. When you pass me you will see that, though a country gentleman, and a very moderate one, I do not live in a desert. My

windows look upon a green walk, delightfully sheltered; on the other side of which, to be sure, is the road, but bounded by gardens, parted out among cottagers, who keep them spruce and fresh, because it is for their own benefit to do so. You may say they are too near, and Lady Grandborough says they are vulgar. Not so I, who am most interested about the matter. I see the owners daily digging, sowing, watering, or gathering; and whistling at their labours, because they are for their own benefit.

“ God, through Nature, seems to bless all this. But from this I go to Grandborough, where Nature is not known, though Art is, with a vengeance. I find myself in a palace: all is landscape, taste, and marble. I approach the mansion with more sense of awe, and more necessary caution, than I like when entering a dwelling, where I want and hope for comfort. I have a hundred steps to get up—very inconvenient for bad weather, and a little gout. I am out of breath, but must regain it, to express my admiration of the rich portico, the rich pillars, and the rich frieze and cornice. I wish I could say so much for the rich, cold floors that petrify my feet. I am conducted to a dressing-room, where the fire, which has been kindled five minutes before, only shows what was *intended* to be there,

by the puffs of smoke that the cold chimney emits into the room.

“ Well, at last I get down to the living-room, in search of comfort, or at least of my noble relations the host or hostess. But they are all out in different parties in the park, though their dinner hour was seven, which has just struck ; and even when they come in, they will take another hour to dress. When we do assemble, I am allowed to give no natural play to my feelings, thoughts, or inquiries ! I am pressed into the service, to examine and admire what, ten to one, I do not understand a whit more than my Lord or my Lady who shows them, or a throng of other guests who join in the admiration.

“ After dinner, I happily escape into a corner, and get hold of an amusing book, a fresh newspaper ; or fall into an abstraction of thought ; or fall asleep,—which is better, and often my wont at home. In short, if I am in any way myself, I am reckoned a Goth, or a swine, and totally unfit (which God knows is true), for the *brilliant attractions* of a great country-house. Now out upon such brilliancy.

‘ Give me again my hollow tree.’

“ O ! there is excellent philosophy in that

country mouse! I could read it for ever with profit and pleasure; and though so nearly related to my Lord and, I believe liked by him, yet with poor Anne Boleyn—

‘ I swear ’tis better to be lowly born,
And range with humble livers in content,
Than to be perkt up in a glittering grief,
And wear a golden sorrow.’ ”

This unexpected and pathetic ending of Blythfield’s ludicrous distresses, gave a different turn to my feelings regarding him. It seemed even to throw a dignity about the subject, and I began almost to admire at least the independence of what he called his selfishness. How many had I known who would have gladly starved all the winter through, to have been admitted to Lady Grandborough’s tortoiseshell boudoir, or my Lord’s marble halls! I began, therefore, to honour my new acquaintance, who seemed to have talent as well as proper feelings; and not the less from the justice he did to his relation’s virtues, though he could not admire his house, his hours, or his wife.

“ To do him justice,” said he, “ it is his Lady, not himself, to whom Grandborough owes its repulsive properties. But the secret shows itself. She was, in fact, *parvenue*, and originally under-

bred ; for which she thinks to make up by practising in excess all the ultra vagaries of those with whom she now mixes, and thinks to bring herself to a level with them by a wrong road. See what it is to have fine eyes ;—for that was all the merit or fortune either that she bestowed upon Lord Grandborough,—a sort of *marriage de garnison*.”

“ Is he happy ?” said I.

“ His good humour will not allow him unnecessarily to be otherwise ; and his wife is true to him,” answered he.

We all now came together to Marlborough, whose superb, convenient, and reasonable inn made we wish to pass the evening there with Willoughby, who was to cross the country early the next morning towards Dorsetshire ; and Blythfield having gone upon some business he had in the town, Willoughby, who had sometimes been at his house, gave me all the information about him I could desire.

I was not surprised to find that he too had a turn for observation, though anything but a wanderer like Willoughby. Indeed, his whole happiness seemed summed up, as Willoughby said, at home, where independence of annoyance from without, and command of his own movements

within, seemed the boundary of his wishes. In fact, though so highly connected, and of no mean fortune, he knew nothing to be ambitious about, but his ease. He was easy in his manners ; 'easy in his dress ; easy on his horse ; and, above all, easy in his easy chair. Company that was not easy plagued him ; and when common-place visitors (which he held almost all his richer neighbours to be), came in fine carriages and outriders to his gate, he was sure not to be at home. " Foolish people," he said, " to come ten miles to talk of the weather, which would be just the same, whether they talked of it or not." At the same time if a beggar, or other tramper came to his door, he would listen to all they had to say, as if it was his own business, and often relieved them, sometimes against his conviction.

In his youth he saw King Lear, but cried so, that he never afterwards saw or read a tragedy. Yet he loved poetry : but then it was of an easy kind. He had few servants, though he could afford many ; because to manage them was not easy : he said it required as much care as to manage the House of Commons.

He was once in love, but that made him so *uneasy*, that the match going off, he forswore it ever afterwards. What made him most easy

was an old coat, or old boots, in his love for which he rivalled George I.*: and like Quin, after that illustrious person had grown fat, the easiest hour of the four-and-twenty was when he had *ungartered* for the night. And yet this *ease*, which he so loved and studied, did not arise from an aversion to corporeal exertion; for he was proud of his horse and horsemanship, and was indefatigable in a fox-chace. Yet he never appeared in road or field with a servant, because to be perpetually watching and watched was not ease.

If he paid a visit for a night, he piqued himself upon carrying in his own pocket a shirt and a dressing-pouch of his own invention, which stowed the greatest number of implements in the smallest possible compass. The plan of this he had given to a perfumer in London, who, he said, made his fortune by it.

It may be supposed from all this, added to his being extremely frank, affable, and generous, that he was more popular among his equals and inferiors, than with those above him; whom, how-

* It was said of George I., that the only thing he complained of at being made King of England, was the being obliged, for the honour of his crown, to wear so many new clothes, particularly shoes and boots;—so that at last he fairly bought his old (which were in fact new,) shoes of his pages, whose perquisite they were.

ever, he shunned more from fear of conventional restraints, than from any jealousy of their superiority. Lady Grandborough, indeed, said he was vulgar, and did not live in a manner worthy his birth and fortune ; and he knew this to be her opinion. But as she had been turned, as he said, unexpectedly into a Countess, and was therefore only mongrel, and as, with all his ease of manners, he rather valued himself on being of true breed, the Lady's opinion did not give him much uneasiness. Many, indeed, who did not know him, thought his way of life proceeded from stinginess ; but the sums he gave away to public institutions, and in private benevolence, for ever put that calumny to silence.

From all this you may suppose I ranked him among the happy ; nor was I wrong, as after experience demonstrated.

We took a friendly leave of Willoughby, who was proceeding, as I have mentioned, to fish out adventures on the sea-coast of Dorsetshire.

“ The happiest fellow I ever knew,” said Mr. Blythfield, as he moved off from the inn door, and we turned into that agreeable garden which all travellers through Marlborough ought to visit.

“ Seemingly the most careless,” said I.

“ And therefore happiest,” continued Blythfield.

“That is my philosophy at least, and I have studied all that ever I could lay hands on.”

“I am yet to learn,” answered I.

“The world will soon teach you,” returned my companion; “but it cannot yet have got hold of you.”

“Has it of you?” I asked.

“It would, if I were to let it: but, from a school-boy, the determination not to give myself up to anything, so as to be its liege man, and, still more, the *nil admirari*, became my favourite tenets.”

“Are you so indifferent?” I asked: “and can you so forego the pleasure meant for us by Nature?”

“What?”

“The pursuits of ambition, whether for wealth or for power; or if not these, the social affections, the charities of kindred, the relations of friend, husband, and father.”

“What have you done for all these yourself?” asked he, with a significant look.

I own I felt a little embarrassed, and replied, “I am at present still young, and though I have done nothing, yet I have *les meilleures dispositions du monde*. Of friendship, I certainly am capable.”

“Possibly to be disappointed, even in that,” he answered; “but as to other tenderer connections, I wish their bereavement or failure did not

overbalance the delight they certainly *may* bring along with them."

As he laid a stress upon *may*, I asked if a *possibility* of failure ought to deter any one from attempting an honourable, promising, or profitable enterprise.

He replied readily enough (and as if he had considered the matter), "Certainly not, if disposition lead that way. But I will own to you the misery I have seen in the happiest marriages; the lovely wife and angelic progeny fading by degrees before the drooping heart of the husband and father, till that heart seemed broke. All this made me a coward; and I willingly renounced a bed, though of sweets and flowers, where serpents seemed concealed, only to make their sting more deadly. I have so often seen the highest spirit brought down in a moment by death, never to rise again, that this must at once explain and excuse my celibacy."

I respected this affecting representation too much to contest it vigorously, but said something on the duty imposed upon us by the Author of Nature, to perpetuate the world, and succour one another. To this he assented, but added, "Luckily for us poor philosophers of selfishness (or Epicureans, if you will so dignify us), there are enough of brave spirits to perpetuate the

world, and to enable us by their exertions to enjoy our ease in security. Do not let us, therefore, throw it away of our own accord, by embarking on a sea where, though there may be fair weather, there are certainly terrible storms. I do not deny that the merit, the reputation, the rewards of the world, are all on the side of the active; but as for the reputation and reward, it is often a toss up how they are bestowed, and certainly how soon they may be withdrawn. Look at the greatest Generals and Statesmen! How soon are they forgotten, and languish out their latter lives unheeded, if not hated, by our generous shopkeepers, because they continue to pay what was originally a debt of gratitude, but is too soon considered an undeserved burthen."

At this moment we were passed by a gentleman in the walk, who saluted Blythfield, and who, by his military air and threadbare coat, seemed, I thought, a half-pay officer.

"You are right," said Blythfield, "and he is an illustration, in an inferior way, of what I am observing. He is poor enough, but has humour, which keeps him up, and makes him welcome here as a member of a country club, which might rival Bunbury's. One of his repartees I must relate, as it belongs to our subject. As a military man, twice wounded, our patriotic members had

the grace actually, though in time of peace, to place him at the upper end of the table. But this gave great offence to a topping tradesman, a corn-merchant of the town, who was reckoned, and indeed published by himself, as a twenty-thousand-pound man. In short, there was a sort of rivalry between him and the Captain (as he was called, though only a Lieutenant). The Captain, not unnaturally, did not object to hear of ‘ the battles, sieges, fortunes he had passed,’ and which his club, out of sheer kindness, were often fond of drawing from him. This displeased the corn merchant, who used to say, brutally enough, ‘ there were five hundred as good as he ; and as he had been paid for his services, there was no merit.’ ‘ All in this room,’ he once added, looking round for applause, ‘ have contributed to your support by the taxes they have paid, and you have only done your duty.’ The good feeling of most of the members was shocked ; but the Captain, with great coolness, pulling out a farthing from some copper in his pocket, presented it to the corn-merchant. ‘ There, Sir,’ said he, ‘ you have said this so often, that I am resolved it shall no longer be a burthen to you ; and as this is about the proportion of my reward (if, indeed, it is not a great deal more,) that you have had to supply, I request that from hence-

forward we may be quits as to money, and that I may have the pleasure to think I have served you for nothing.' ”

“ An admirable reproof,” I observed, “ and I trust it had its effect.”

“ It kept the corn-merchant away three club-days,” said Blythfield; “ but it did not mend the good Lieutenant’s finances, nor do away my disgust at the thanklessness of patriotism. But this is a mere drop in the ocean: look at Aristides, Phocion, Camillus, and a thousand others, and ask a man studious of his happiness, whether he can justify trusting it to the applause of the world? What numbers are there whom we ourselves may remember filling the public eye and public ear, soldiers and sailors who have saved their country from destruction; statesmen who have steered the gallant ship to glory, through the most terrific billows, rocks, and quicksands! How many of these have sunk unmourned, and are already forgotten in their graves, or, if still alive, are thought to have lived too long! The generous maxim is, that nobody is missed. Coriolanus himself would be banished to-morrow, if the good citizens of London had proper tribunes, and could have their will; and even illustrious Aldermen, once the stars of civic wisdom, have grown dim, dwindled into links, and will soon be

snuffed out by still more enlightened patriots! For all these reasons, indifference—that is, as much as possible, forgetfulness of the past, and carelessness as to the future—in short, such attention as Willoughby gives to trifles that are uppermost at the moment, easily obtained and easily parted with;—this is the creed I have ventured to broach as mine.”

He said this so emphatically, that I almost believed him in earnest; at the same time a sort of suppressed smile, and several instances of his benevolence which Willoughby had related, made me imagine that he knew this was rather what he had furbished up as a theory, than his practical feeling. He assured me, however, that his dread of being as uneasy as he saw others made by what, if unmixed, were undoubted pleasures, was so great, that it kept him from pursuing any active career. Thus, as he had said, the fear of loving a wife and family too well to risk their loss, kept him single. So also he refused cultivating society beyond mere agreeable acquaintance, which might be easily replaced if interrupted. The consequence was that, though he esteemed, and was esteemed by many, he had no friend. He had been even known to give notice to a very worthy and pleasant neighbour, that he would wean himself from him, because

he found he was becoming too necessary to him. His friend laughed at him, but he kept his word.

He was always gracious with strangers, and was fond of familiarizing himself with the good people in his neighbourhood, particularly if they were remarkable for any peculiar qualities or traits of character. A village barber was his great amusement, and a "blacksmith listening to a tailor's news" would engage him for half an hour together. We may suppose this made him popular with persons in those ranks of life. By the upper he was considered, at best, as a humourist. But as he was of a high family, and had a fair fortune, even those who did not know his real good qualities were desirous of keeping well with him; those who did, loved him as well as he would let them.

What I saw and heard of this my new acquaintance, made me willingly consent to remain with him that day and night in Marlborough; and not the less because I found myself surrounded by most active preparations for a sort of Country Ball that evening, which, he said, with my objects, I should do well to attend.

Meantime, as we met, or were passed by, many of his acquaintance, which, luckily for me, were of a most heterogeneous sort, I was amused by his sketches. One person in particular, who met

him in the street, was so full of thanks for a service he had done him, that I could not help asking what it was.

“ ’Tis the strangest fellow,” said he. “ You would suppose, from the sternness of his countenance, that he was of a most inflexible character; which he indeed affects, and says, with great pomp, that his resolves are like the laws of the Medes and Persians. He is, in fact, that not uncommon, and certainly not unamusing, character—a country oracle. He is, with all this, the most boon companion and best diner-out in all the neighbourhood; and his conversational reputation was in such request, that he was perpetually invited. For this, indeed, they say he used to prepare expressly; and on the morning when a dinner was at hand, was always shut up, partly to keep himself fresh and vigorous for the keen encounter of wits that awaited him, partly to add to his stores of joke and anecdote. Unfortunately, the table joys *at* dinner did not agree with his digestion afterwards, whatever the feast of reason might with his mind. In short, he was always so ill from these repasts, that he was forced to forswear them; and absolutely, being a very religious man withal, made a vow before the parson of the parish, that he would never again either accept an invitation to dinner,

or have company at home, for two years. His health certainly profited, but his mind and spirits languished, and he pined and sickened for want of the usual display. His friends, too, sorrowed, but had not the wit to help him ;—when luckily I came to his assistance. As I knew, with all his inflexibility, and even his religious scruples as to breaking a vow, that he was sometimes much disposed to what is called cheating the Devil, I set before him that, as his vow only went to refuse all *invitations* to dinner, he might go when he pleased *without* invitation ; and, at all events, as dinner was dinner, and not desert, he might attend any company he liked, *after the cloth was removed*. The scrupulous man's joy at this subterfuge cannot be described ; he immediately put it in practice, and (what I am a little ashamed of) thanks me for it with the fervour you witnessed, wherever he has met me since."

This was diverting, and proved to me what a strange medley of ingredients our happiness or discontent may be composed of, when the mind is left loose without a rudder. I communicated this very new observation to Blythfield, who said I should have abundant proof of its truth in the course of my tour ; yet he felt sure that the negative happiness which he owned to be his, though

less intense, was to be found in greater quantity than either the positive happiness, or its opposite *misery*.

“ For *discontent*, however,” said he, after a pause, “ I will not answer.”

“ It is an Englishman’s birth-right,” said I.

“ And well does he exert it,” he replied ; “ and, if I mistake not, here comes one who is as good an exemplification of it as you could wish to see.”

It was Sir John Goldsworth, who went by in a phaeton and four, which he drove with the greatest possible dignity, and kissed his hand to Blythfield, in all the proper stiffness of distance and civility. A waggon blocking the way, he was forced to reply to a question from Blythfield, whether he was going to Lord Grandborough’s public dinner, which was to be held the day after.

“ I wonder, Sir,” said he, “ you can ask such a question. I go to no public days anywhere, least of all to a dinner without express invitation, nor even then, to be included in a *posse comitatus*.”

Sir John was a man of no common calibre: he had both birth and fortune, but more pride than either. Hence, though not without ability, and of great liberality (proceeding, however, more from shame of doing a mean thing, than from any rooted principle,) he was not perhaps so con-

sidered as he might have been. He was a good book magistrate, but never attended those useful things called justice-meetings, because there were too many little Squires, or of the clerical order: for he was dogmatical in his principle, that no clergyman ought to interfere with country gentlemen in this their natural, and what ought to be their exclusive province. But more than this, he never was *invited* by his brother-magistrates; without which there could be no proper distinction of persons. It may be supposed from this, that he was a great aristocrat; and he was so, as well as a high Tory: which I mention, because it by no means follows that he might not have been an insufferable aristocrat, and a great Whig at the same time! He had large estates, and a handsome house in another county, for which he had been a member; but being thrown out at the last election, not by a Whig, but another Tory, he left his residence in dudgeon, broke up his large establishment, and declared he would never return to it. Upon this piece of revenge he consulted his brother, a man of plain sense, who knew mankind, and advised him against it.

“Ought I not to show the world what I think of them?” asked Sir John.

“Yes! and the world will laugh at you for your pains.”

Sir John never forgave this affront. But his pride was at its height in another affair, almost too romantic and chivalrous to be ridiculed as it was. In his younger days he was desperately in love; and, strange to say, considering his character, with a tenant's daughter, whom he even intended to marry. For here the pride which one would suppose would have prevented such an event, promoted it: since, as he was a great deal above thinking he could *receive* any accession of consequence from any marriage he could make, though with a princess, he thought he might confer honour, but not lose it. He feared, however, being accepted, less for his own sake, than that of his fortune; and it was whispered that the young person, whose beauty might, indeed, have encouraged any extravagance, was courted by a neighbour of her own age, though neither of them had a sixpence. In the plenitude of his consequence, he resolved to enter the lists with his rival, on fair terms; and to do it fairly, without mentioning his ulterior views, except to her father, he settled five thousand pounds on his mistress, at her own disposal: which she very promptly bestowed, with herself, upon the object of her own choice. This made him, more than ever, quarrel with his own county; "and he now," said Blythfield, who gave me this account, "contents himself here with a

small shooting-place, where he sees but little company, nor any that will not do him proper reverence."

"His kissing his hand to me was a condescension, but it was not for my sake, but lest he should be wanting to his own good-breeding: for he hates my politics, and would willingly proscribe all who differ from him, as almost an affront to his understanding. In parliament, though he always supported the Tory Administration, he quarrelled with the Treasury for presuming to send him notes for attendance."

"All this, however," said I, "shows great disinterestedness, and so far is estimable. It is a pity, therefore, that it should not be rewarded by content. I wish he resembled you as much in the enjoyment of himself, as he seems to do in his pride of independence."

We pursued this conversation for some time, after the subject of it had disappeared; and the contrast and resemblance between Blythfield and Goldsworth seemed to me to be remarkable. In the hands of some modern Plutarch, they might be made even striking. Each had a high sense of independence, which gave a bias to his sentiments and conduct, and impelled him to live for himself, abstractedly from all thought of cultivating, still less of pleasing others. But Blyth-

field did this, as he confessed, from sheer love of ease ; Goldsworth from what, I was told, he never allowed—an exuberant pride. Blythfield was indifferent whether his great relations, or any great people whatever, showed him attention or not ; Goldsworth was jealous to the quick of all forms of respect, and thought the want of them was a personal injury. Hence, Blythfield, if people slighted him, laughed at them as fools ; Goldsworth revenged himself by treating them as enemies. Blythfield went everywhere as the whim listed : Goldsworth would only move in certain company, and that only when they showed him profound deference.

The Lord Lieutenant once sent him a buck, and wrote him a letter full of flattery, requesting his support of certain measures. The answer was characteristic :—

“ You might have spared your venison, as well as your flatteries. The venison I return, but I shall support you from principle.”

My Lord then sent the buck to Blythfield, hoping he would accept it, though his political antagonist. Blythfield’s answer was also characteristic :—

“ I accept your venison with thanks : I am sorry that myself and tenants must be marshalled in the Town Hall, to-morrow, against you.”

It follows from all this, that one of these

worthies was seldom out of humour, the other seldom in it. The one was too fond of ease not to be careless of what was thought of him; the other too proud of himself not to be jealous of everybody's opinion. To sum up all, Blythfield was generally *en robe de chambre*; Goldsworth always in full dress. Blythfield would have submitted to the self intrusion of a beggar unexpectedly into his house; Goldsworth, without introduction, would have rejected a Duke.

Which was the most popular, which the happiest, or how I set each of them down in my Journal, need not to be asked.

There are people, however, who are neither Blythfields nor Goldsworths. One of them we met, a forward, sanguine sort of country beau, who said to Blythfield, he supposed he was come for the ball that night, and to attend his cousin Grandborough's public dinner the next day; and when Blythfield assured him he was going home, "Well, now," replied he, "to see the difference there is in persons! There is poor Simcock and his wife, who lately, you know, came into a fortune by the death of their uncle, the great town-mercator, breaking their hearts because Lord G.'s steward assured them they were to be asked, and the invitation is not come."

"You, of course, are going yourself?" said Blythfield.

“ Why, no !” he replied, with something like embarrassment, and giving his handkerchief to his nose : “ I as good as told Lord Grandborough, these fine doings did not suit me ; so he has never asked me. Nor do I wish it ; but as for the poor Simpcocks, they make themselves perfectly ridiculous by their anxiety about such a thing.”

“ Very philosophic, truly,” said Blythfield, as soon as his friend had passed. “ Now, to my certain knowledge, that fellow would give his ears to be invited to the dinner. Not that he would find the least enjoyment in company he so little understands ; but he wishes to talk of it at his club, or on a market-day among *bons bourgeois*, not so distinguished as himself. So you see we simple country folk have as much folly and nonsense, in the shape of ambition, as the finest of your Londoners. However, you will have ample scope for observation on this point, if you will go to the ball.”

This I promised to do, as well as to comply with his request of calling upon him in my way to Bath.

END OF VOL. II.











UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA



3 0112 056526202